

*The Pacific*

# SPECTATOR

## ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

*Alan L. Tyler*

## A RED FLAG COMES DOWN

*Russell F. Wulff*

*Also*

LESLIE A. FIEDLER, PETER VIERECK

THOMAS MOLNAR, SUE DAVIDSON

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# THE PACIFIC SPECTATOR

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**L**AST OCTOBER we began a series about the American intellectual. Seven distinguished contributors have analyzed him, and what they have written, however perspicacious, has been highly critical. This creature, we are told, lives half stupefied by fears he has himself created. His barricades are defensive; he rarely rallies forth from behind them. A rootless Bohemian of defecated intellectuality, he does not seek to improve his own mind and character, but tries to mold society close to his heart's desire. He will punish those who disagree with him if he can.

Two or three decades ago he—or some of his fellows—supported the Communist Party as a revolt against bourgeois American culture. With hands uncalled for, he fancied himself a leader of the proletariat. In time he saw the Party for what it was and left it. Meantime, his concern for the masses turned out to be a symptom of his own uncertain status. Once his “private ail” was righted, his ardor cooled. Today he is a denatured man. Even in his private life he proves inadequate, an ineffectual lover, husband (or wife), parent and grandparent. Less vociferous now, he remains “silently . . . at war with the world.”

We learn further that the intellectual, “not faithful even to himself, much less to God,” must endure the final indignity of discovering that attacks against him are “projections of his own self-distrust.”

All this may be true, but we think it is not the whole story. One of our contributors has admitted that most intellectuals are “leaders of the community in every sense,” and we believe that this aspect bears looking into. What we hope to find, before closing this series, is a spokesman for the intellectual. We hold that, despite all shortcomings, he merits a bold and able one.

Robert C. North

## A JOURNAL OF

## SUMMER

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#### FRANKLIN W. HOUN

("Chinese Communist Publication Policy and Thought Control") is

(Continued on page 295)

# ANTI-AMERICANISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

*by Alan L. Tyler*

**A**GITATION for re-examining Philippine ties with the United States is not new to Filipino politics. Manuel L. Quezon, the father of Filipino nationalism, was most vocal during his period of service to his country, and throughout the years of American domination in the Philippines there were many outbursts of nationalistic sentiment.

Independence and sovereignty a decade ago brought an end to the agitation, and it was not until late 1952 that a resurgence began. The late Elpidio Quirino, then President of the Philippines, lashed out against the United States when it became apparent that he was looked upon with disfavor by this country and its press. His criticisms were reinforced by Claro M. Recto in 1954, when the Senator took up an "Asia for Asians" policy in an effort to discredit the popular Magsaysay administration and its pro-American sentiments. But these expressions of anti-American sentiment were mild in comparison with recent utterances in Philippine political quarters which have been both vociferous and far-reaching.

Late in March of this year—the tenth year of Philippine independence—the Speaker of the House of Representatives, José B. Laurel, Jr., accused the United States of taking its Philippine ally for granted and discriminating against Filipinos in "their own country." It was a direct blow at the heart of Philippine-American relations. The effect was electric: high Philippine officialdom divided itself into two camps with complete disregard for party lines.

Majority sentiment in the House of Representatives was for a joint re-examination on the part of the executive branch and Congress of the current basis of Philippine-American ties. The ostensible purpose was to identify weak points so that the historical bonds of friendship between the Philippines and the United States could be



further strengthened. But the abrogation of certain treaties considered unsatisfactory to the Filipino side was fundamental to the proposal, and President Ramon Magsaysay balked at pushing the matter forward. His opposition was reinforced by a potent majority in the Senate.

The House stood firm. Relying on his great prestige to steer Congress away from any move that might produce a crisis in Philippine-American relations, the President met with congressional leaders to scuttle the re-examination idea. He failed. Instead, he was forced to agree to a compromise: issues with the United States were to be resolved through normal diplomatic channels, but in the meanwhile the two chambers of Congress were to study the situation and make suggestions to the Chief Executive. The President's acceptance of this plan attested to the strength of the re-examinationist movement.

Speaker Laurel's denunciation, made during a commencement address in the Province of Pangasinan and entitled "The Great Disenchantment," touched on some of the most vital aspects of the Philippine-United States partnership: economic and military aid, the Philippine proposal for delimitation of U.S. military bases, and trade relations. The speech not only came at a time when anti-American feeling had been building up in the lower house of Congress and other official circles in Manila, but it also climaxed a series of developments that—over a period of about four months—had been stirring antagonism toward the United States on a broader plane. These were:

1. *A sudden rise in price of badly needed American goods (such as tires, textiles, and essential food commodities) as a result of import duties levied under the Laurel-Langley Agreement, coupled with the creation of artificial shortages by hoarders and profiteers.*—Filipinos, in analyzing these twin developments, tended to rationalize in anti-American terms. The economic plight of the Philippines, many critics charged, was a direct consequence of the American colonial policy of developing the Philippines, not as an economically self-sufficient unit, but purely as a market for American goods.

2. *A crisis that developed—even as prices continued on the upswing—over national economic planning.*—Admissions that Philippine dollar reserves were nearing the “bottom of the barrel” opened government proposals for economic planning to outspoken criticism and focused attention on what had—and had not—been done toward weaning the Philippines away from too much dependence on the American market through the development of new export outlets in Europe and Asia.

3. *The arrest by American Armed Forces sentries of a Filipino mining operator in Capas, Tarlac—the same place, ironically, where American and Filipino troops shared imprisonment during World War II.*—The arrest was made on grounds of trespassing on a part of the Clark Air Base reservation, and it cut straight into an issue about which a great many Filipinos are sensitive—the American claim that the United States has sole ownership on land where U.S. military bases are built. The mining operator claimed his mine was never a part of the reservation, and the Bureau of Mines of the Philippine government backed him. The story was well played up in the newspapers and over the radio networks. As details began to touch on aspects of Philippine-American relations beyond the problem of military bases, a good deal of emotion went into it, stirring the Filipinos to a pitch of excitement.

Into this setting the Speaker of the House, a rising young politician with presidential aspirations, threw his bombshell. Young Laurel's blast did not fit into any precise category. Many Filipinos thought it was distinctly anti-American; others felt it was merely an expression of Filipinism. Whatever it might turn out to be in the end, the fact remains that Laurel's speech has disturbed thousands of well-disposed Filipinos and might very well affect the intimate character of Philippine-American relations. It is in the interest of the United States to analyze the situation so that an intelligent approach can be made.

The impact of Laurel's blast can best be appreciated in terms of its press and radio reception. The Philippine press has an aggregate circulation of about a million copies, and the radio an approximately equal number of sets. As radio sets are owned by practically



the same people who buy newspapers, a maximum of 1.5 million families listening to or reading the story would seem to be a generous estimate. Multiply this by five persons per family and the audience would total 7.5 million—roughly a third of the national population of some 22 million.

While the impact on national thinking was considerable, it was, however, a diffused one. Of the six national English-language daily newspapers published in Manila, which account for about half the total newspaper circulation in the Philippines, only one, *The Chronicle*, which speaks for the sugar bloc, came out with anti-American editorials. The others stressed that the welfare of the Philippines lay in the maintenance of economic and military partnership with the United States—and called for calmness and sobriety. Most radio commentators took this same position.

To a considerable number of Filipinos, Laurel's charge had an element of unreality, and this reaction may be assumed to be general. A preponderance of the Filipino voting population were born under the American flag, were trained in schools patterned after those of the United States, and are familiar with many facets of American thought. They use English in oral and written discourse as though it were their own language. American books constitute their main reading, and they listen to American music oftener than to Filipino compositions. They even encourage their children to use American modes of dress—such as jeans and cowboy suits—although these have no roots in Filipino tradition. American customs and thinking, in other words, have been deeply infused into the Filipino way of life.

In the face of these facts, it is doubtful if Laurel's denunciation, even though made under circumstances that favored anti-American attack, was strong enough to undermine the confidence of a majority of Filipino people in American good faith.

Yet other factors are relevant. Probably the most vital of these is the fact that nationalism is sweeping the country and that it appears to be led by people born under the American regime in the Philippines. Fondness for American thought and tradition remains as strong as ever, but there is a growing interest in the historical past

and in a return to the original Asian sources of Filipino culture. This seeming paradox is epitomized in the Magsaysay administration: never has the use of the national dress, the "barong Tagalog," been so popular as in this administration which counts the preservation of Philippine-American ties among its basic programs. But the wave of nationalism has more dramatic manifestations: despite the opposition of the powerful Catholic church, public opinion forced the cabinet to authorize the publication of an anticlerical book, a biography of Andres Bonifacio (to which the Philippine government held the copyright), and the Senate recently passed a bill compelling all schools to encourage the reading of two nationalistic novels by Dr. José Rizal.

These developments indicate the direction in which the Philippine national consciousness is going. They indicate that the Philippines, despite the fact that it has borrowed heavily from the American political and cultural tradition, is finding its true perspective in Asia and that its viewpoints are acquiring an Asian focus. This represents a shift in orientations which is likely to become more pronounced within the next two generations.

Out of all this, one basic conclusion emerges inescapably: the traditional, unquestioning Filipino faith in America—the faith that was displayed in Bataan and in guerrilla action against the Japanese during the war—is gradually receding.

In reciting his grievances against the United States, Speaker Laurel was careful to point out that the Philippines owed America an "immense and incalculable" moral debt—"she has helped us stand alone on our own feet and prepared us for statehood; and, when war blighted our land, she fought shoulder to shoulder with us, eventually liberating us from the enemy." And he made it clear that he was not indicting America—"my purpose is to correct, not to condemn."

But here Laurel was quibbling. Despite protestations that his purpose was "not to condemn," he used words that were sharp with condemnation. Items:

1. *On American financial assistance:* Up to 1953 the Philippines had received only \$803 million in grants and credits. Two



former enemies of the United States and the Philippines—Germany and Japan—had received more: Germany \$3.7 billion and Japan \$2.4 billion. In 1954 neutralist India received \$29 million and Indonesia, another neutralist country, \$20 million. The Philippines that year obtained a “trifling” \$8 million.

2. *On military aid*: The Philippines received very much less than Japan, Thailand, or National China. Laurel maintains that “moral and historical affinities, not to say strategic factors, entitle us to a greater regard from our American allies. . . . What makes matters worse is that much of the equipment given us under the U.S. military assistance program is not only inadequate but dangerously obsolete.”

3. *On trade relations*: “Only recently our policy [of restricting importation of] American Virginia leaf tobacco prompted the American Congress to threaten us with reprisal by excluding the Philippines from participation in the benefits of increased United States domestic sugar consumption in spite of its implied commitments under the Laurel-Langley Agreement.”

4. *On Filipino labor*: “In United States territories like Guam, Wake Island, and Samoa, where around 25,000 of our country-men are employed in defense jobs, Filipino laborers are being dismissed in order to avoid payment of salary differentials to which they are entitled under the new U.S. Minimum Wage Law.”

5. *On Filipino-American relations*: “But the unkindest cut of all is the realization that even here, in our own country, America seems to be unmindful of, if it has not altogether forgotten, the ties of amity that should bind our nations. It seems indeed that we are being treated in our own territory as interlopers instead of hosts, as a subject people still instead of a sovereign nation. Among several American business concerns operating at great profit in this country, Filipinos are, as a general rule, not yet acknowledged as qualified for executive positions, which are still filled with Americans drafted from the home office. Irrespective of individual qualifications, the rate of salaries for Filipinos differs considerably from the compensation given to American employees. Even under the joint aid program provided for by the Quirino-Foster Agreement, it ap-

pears that the total cost of administration for the past five years amounted to ₱63.9 million, ₱16.3 million of which was used by Filipinos and ₱47.6 million by Americans. Significantly, the total appropriation for the payment of 896 Filipino employees in five years amounted to ₱4,191,000, or an average of ₱4,670 per person every year, whereas ₱47.6 million was spent in salaries during the same period for 727 American employees—mostly so-called ‘experts’—or an average of ₱65,500 per person annually.”

6. *On military bases*: “It is particularly in the US military bases—ironically the symbol of continuing PI-US amity—that the relations between our countries have been practically worn to shreds, and threaten to be entirely disrupted. Only a week ago, new fuel was added to the fire of discord when several Filipino miners were detained at the Clark Field–Fort Stotsenburg reservation allegedly for violation of the Bases Agreement. The fact that the Philippine request for the delimitation of American bases conformably to the Agreement has been unacted upon for the past nine years has not relieved the situation; in fact, it has recalled other incidents in this and other bases which have not promoted Philippine-American relations. And today, abuses are allegedly being perpetuated in the bases, against our own people, in our own land, in the name of a borrowed sovereignty.”

Laurel’s thesis was that “we are under the heel of a new oppression subtler and, therefore, viler—an oppression that shatters not our bodies but our illusions and subjects us to a great disenchantment because it takes the form of discrimination, prejudice and ingratitude and comes with a profession of friendship.”

These thoughts are not new. In previous years, in different phrases, the same idea was expressed by another highly respected Filipino, Senator Claro M. Recto, who went so far as to propose cutting all ties with the United States. Recto, of course, was open to the accusation of using an anti-American line in trying to discredit Quirino, and later Maysaysay. Laurel’s case, however, is different: he has no record of being anti-American, and he may be credited with sincerity in seeking “to correct, not to condemn.”

At least two of Laurel’s grievances are unsound. As the Speaker of a chamber that has passed many nationalistic bills, such as the



Retail Trade Nationalization Act which protects the interests of Filipino retailers at the expense of alien businessmen, he should not be surprised if an American congressman takes the attitude that the Philippines should buy American leaf tobacco if it wants to keep the American sugar market. Neither is Laurel justified, on grounds of general principle, in complaining about the personnel policies of American firms in the Philippines. On other matters, however, Laurel apparently was able to articulate the Filipino point of view, as, for example:

1. Apparently it is in the interest of the United States to strengthen two former enemies—Germany and Japan—against possible Communist encroachment. Apparently it is also in its interest to promote the good will of neutralist countries like India and Indonesia. But is it necessary, in the process, to discriminate against a faithful ally? Does one have to be indifferent to America to merit sizable American assistance?

2. Japan and Taiwan, of course, will shield the Philippines against any Communist encroachment from the north. But suppose the shield is shattered. Shall the Philippines then be left defenseless, the way it was after Bataan?

3. The Philippine-American alliance, which according to orators of both countries has been tested in war, apparently is meaningless even in so minor a matter as salary differentials for Filipino workers in U.S. defense installations in Guam and other U.S. territories.

4. In the implementation of the Philippine-American economic co-operation agreement, a government undertaking, why is the American salary rate inordinately above the Filipino?

5. Why does the United States insist on claiming ownership of base areas in the Philippines? Does this mean that, were the situation reversed, the Americans would not lift a finger to prevent an alien government from owning considerable chunks of their territory? And why has the United States consistently delayed negotiations on the delimitation of the base areas? If the boundaries of these areas had been fixed, there would have been no confusion on the Tarlac incident.

The question of ownership of U.S. military bases in the Philip-

pinos is potentially the most dangerous aspect of this entire question on Philippine-American relations. The manner in which the United States handles this delicate situation will in the main be the focal point which will determine future relationships with the Philippines.

Bluntly put, the questions that have been asked above by well-disposed Filipinos will have to be answered. These questions are being raised wherever the press and the radio reach, that is, among about a third of the Philippine national population. The remaining two-thirds are not voicing them now, but it is certain that they will do so soon. For anti-Americanism is being used by a potent political and economic group, the sugar bloc, to discredit the Magsaysay administration. In several aspects it is succeeding.

The measure of the sugar bloc's success has been the way it has divided Congress on the issue. It counts with the support of a sizable majority in the House, and two respected legislators—Recto and Lorenzo Tanada—form its rallying point in the Senate. With these men in its order of battle, the bloc, in a showdown at the polls, can do much damage initially.

Why is the sugar bloc preparing to fight Magsaysay? Several reasons have been advanced, but the most plausible is that the U.S.-backed Magsaysay program of uplifting the common man strikes at the source of power of the sugar tycoons. It will eventually edge the tycoons, as a group, from their traditional position of primacy in political and economic affairs. They are therefore determined to resist any move that might force them to abdicate this favored position.

Shrewdly, the tycoons are exploiting a natural political development—the rising tide of nationalism in the Philippines—to deglamorize Magsaysay, who stands for the closest possible partnership between the Philippines and the United States. They know that by hitting the Americans they are bound to hit Magsaysay somehow. In this they have been unknowingly abetted by the shortsightedness of some American officials who do not realize that in discharging their duties in the Philippines they have a public relations job to do for the United States. A recent example is the Olongapo case, which dramatized the Filipino accusation that high-ranking



American naval officers were running the base in a fashion that ignored the sensibilities of the Filipinos as an independent people. Another was the readiness of experts of the International Cooperation Administration (ICA) to overstep their limits as advisors to the Philippine government on joint economic projects and to impose their will on Filipino administrators.

All this builds up animosity against the Americans and provides the widely read organ of the sugar bloc, the *Manila Chronicle* (circulation about 50,000), with an opportunity to impugn America's good name on the pretense of fostering nationalism. This campaign will intensify in the next few months when the *Chronicle* opens a radio station powerful enough to blanket the archipelago. Undoubtedly the same campaign will be used over the radio, a campaign so effectively subtle it has mustered the support of even so clear-minded an official as the majority floor leader of the House, Representative Arturo Tolentino of Manila.

But the important development is that the lines appear to be forming and that the sugar bloc now counts with a small cadre of *políticos* around whom strength can be developed. What the bloc needs is a candidate for President. The search apparently has been started: young Laurel possibly had been encouraged to deliver his anti-American blast so that the extent of his influence could be measured.

It would be needless to point out that defeat for Magsaysay would incalculably set back Philippine-American friendship. With Magsaysay as President of the Philippines, the United States can be sure of the Philippines as a diplomatic staging area in a region where communism is winning signal victories. It can dissipate Asian distrust of the white man by pointing to what has happened in the Philippines as a striking example of Western co-operation with Asia. If the United States is rejected by the Philippines, the great experiment of democracy in Southeast Asia may—in the long run—fail.

# FARM PRICE POLICY AND THE SURPLUSES\*

*by William O. Jones*

IT IS unfortunate that price policy is so often thought of as the whole of American agricultural policy. It is especially unfortunate when students from other countries, who admire and envy the achievements of American agriculture and wish to imitate them at home, attempt to do so by copying the most controversial and the least successful of our farm policies. Many aspects of our agricultural program now arouse little controversy, and are generally accepted as beneficial both to farmers and to the nation. I refer to such federal activities as the farm credit system, the rural electrification program, subsidization of agricultural research and education, and the regulation and servicing of commodity markets. In the months lying just ahead it is unlikely that we shall hear much about these other programs, even though some of them caused quite a flurry in their day, and still do in some quarters; we can be quite certain, however, that the price program will occupy a prominent position in the national political campaign, and the positions taken on it may well play a decisive part in the election, or so it will be alleged.

The price program receives all this special attention not because of any difference between Republicans and Democrats on the objectives of the program, or because of any important differences as to how these objectives are to be achieved; for a number of years now both parties have sponsored essentially the same program with minor differences as to details of its operation, but with no real disagreement about the general plan. The debate over farm price policy stems essentially from the fact that the program pursued by the government since 1938, the program that seemed headed for trouble in 1940 and that was in difficulties on the eve of the Korean war, has

\* A talk delivered before the Stanford Alumni Conferences at Monterey on February 22, 1956, and at Los Angeles on February 26, 1956.



finally led us into a situation that calls for quick and drastic action. And so far neither party seems to have hit upon a better program than the one that has led us into the present blind alley.

## I

The basic legislation under which the price support programs of the Department of Agriculture operate is contained in the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, the second "Triple A." This was the third major agricultural act passed under the Roosevelt administration: it was the product of experience with the two earlier acts, and with the pioneer price support act adopted during the Hoover administration. The second Triple A was passed at a time when the recovery of the 1930's had been checked by recession, and in some sense it might be regarded as emergency legislation. But it was adopted as a permanent program, and although amended many times, its basic character has remained unchanged up to the present.

The principal lesson learned from earlier legislation was that prices can be supported above free market levels only if the supporting agency has effective control of production. This may not sound like a particularly profound proposition, but it had to be learned the hard way. It seems fairly obvious that if prices are raised above equilibrium levels, sellers will offer more, buyers will take less, with the consequence that something will be left over. This, I believe, is what is referred to in some quarters as the "immutable law of supply and demand." The framers of the 1938 Act provided the Secretary of Agriculture with what they believed were powerful controls over the production and marketing of certain important farm crops, the so-called basic crops, then comprising corn, wheat, cotton, tobacco, and—somewhat later—peanuts.

The major objective of the Act was to raise farmers' incomes, and to do this by raising farm prices above the level that would result from the free play of market forces. And the mechanism adopted was restriction of output through limitation of the acreage that could be planted to each of the basic crops, and of the amount of each crop that might be brought to market; acreage allotments

and marketing quotas were to enable the Secretary of Agriculture to raise prices to fair levels, to parity.

Because it would take time to bring about the desired increase in prices by restriction of output and of marketings, the Secretary was also given the authority, and the money, to remove from the market by outright purchase or by conditional purchase any stocks that were likely to depress prices below the target levels. The expectation was that the government-owned stocks could be disposed of when production controls had had time to make themselves felt.

Parity price of a farm product was defined as the price of that commodity in the five crop years 1909-14, corrected for changes in the general price level since then. This is still the price goal for farm products as a whole.

The price goal set for farm products seems a bit outdated now, and indeed it was at least twenty-four years out of date in 1938. But there were persuasive reasons, if not equitable ones, for adopting it. Throughout the nineteenth century, the wholesale prices of farm products in the United States had been rising relative to the wholesale prices of all other products, and they reached their peak, except for wartime booms, in the five years just before World War I.

The Congress in 1938 was not so optimistic as to think that prices of the basic commodities could be brought up to full parity at once. It therefore specified that target levels, that is, the levels at which the Department of Agriculture could buy for its stockpile or make loans to farmers, should range from 52 to 75 per cent of parity, depending upon supplies—the larger the supply, the lower the price level.

In some respects the new program was reasonably successful. Farmers who planted the basic crops did so with assurance that the prices they would receive could not drop below guaranteed minimums, and might in fact be considerably higher. The guaranteed prices were at an attractive level, but even if they had been no more than might be expected from the free market, the fact that they were guaranteed relieved farmers of worry. Both expectation of higher prices and certainty of expectations led farmers to plant more of the basic crops than they otherwise would have, and more than buyers would take at the supported levels. This was to be expected in



the first phase of operations, but very soon the production and marketing controls were supposed to take hold and to bring supply and demand back into balance. In the meantime the Commodity Credit Corporation took the excess off the market for storage.

The outstanding feature of the 1938 Act had been its authorization of new controls over production. But up until the time that the United States entered World War II, these controls were not sufficient to prevent rapid accumulation of surpluses that could not be sold at the artificially high prices. Stocks in the hands of the CCC mounted rapidly and there was beginning to be serious concern in some quarters that the rapidly accumulating surpluses eventually would jeopardize the whole program. Some critics of the program also pointed out that large stocks of basic commodities in the hands of the government, although accumulated in order to support prices, might very easily be used to hold prices down, and that in fact their very existence served to put a damper on price rises and tended to make the price floor a ceiling as well.

The entry of the United States into the war reduced the concern over surpluses. Acreage allotments were replaced by acreage goals. Farmers were exhorted to produce more and were given convincing reasons for doing so in the form of higher guaranteed prices and subsidies. For the basic commodities the support price was raised to a flat 85 per cent even before Pearl Harbor, and shortly after to 90 per cent of parity. Farmers were guaranteed support at this level for the duration of the war and for two years thereafter. Also, the Secretary of Agriculture was given the authority to extend similar support, at the same level, and with the same time guarantee, to other commodities when he deemed it in the national interest to do so.

It was not until December 31, 1946, fifteen months after V-J Day, that President Truman declared that hostilities had ended; the wartime price guarantee of 90 per cent of parity therefore remained in effect for the basic commodities, now including peanuts, and for fourteen other nonbasic commodities until January 1, 1949.

If no new legislation had been passed prior to 1949, the supports for basic commodities would have returned to the levels authorized in the 1938 Act. There was strong pressure, however, to continue

supports at 90 per cent of parity, and legislation adopted in 1948 authorized support at this level, but for the coming year only, after which support was to be from 60 to 90 per cent of parity. In 1949 another act again extended the period of 90 per cent supports, but gradual transition to supports of between 75 and 90 per cent of parity was to begin in 1951. Inauguration of flexible supports, and of modernized parity, continued to be postponed, but finally, in 1955, supports as low as 82½ per cent of parity were permitted, and for the current year as low as 75 per cent.

It should be noted that the debate over whether supports should be flexible or at 90 per cent of parity concerns primarily the basic crops—corn, wheat, cotton, tobacco, rice, and peanuts. For most of the nonbasic commodities support was returned to a discretionary flexible basis in 1949. At the same time, parity was redefined for individual commodities, although not for agricultural commodities taken as a whole, so as to make the relationships between parity prices for the various farm products bear a somewhat closer resemblance to cost and demand conditions of the present day than do those that prevailed forty-five years ago. In general, this meant slightly lower levels for most field crops, and slightly higher levels for most animal products. Although the support program has been almost completely preoccupied with farm crops, the greater part of farm income comes from the sale of livestock products, and has since 1926.

The experience with production control since the end of World War II has paralleled that of the years before Pearl Harbor. Stocks owned by the government were growing rapidly in 1948 and 1949, and had reached about the same level as in 1941, when the Korean war broke out. Fear of wartime shortages among the nations of the free world, and a severe food shortage in India, helped to pull them down to reasonable levels. But since the end of the war in Korea, stocks have grown more rapidly than ever before, until today we have an “ever normal granary” that makes Joseph in Egypt seem improvident. The Commodity Credit Corporation has repeatedly had to have its borrowing power increased, until now it is authorized to go in debt up to \$12 billion. As of November 30, 1955, it had



committed \$10 billion. It owns, or has loaned money on enough wheat to meet all domestic requirements for nearly two years, on cotton to meet domestic requirements for over one year; and on corn to satisfy all buyers of corn for nearly a year, plus lesser amounts of tobacco, wool, feed grains, dairy products, and oils.

The gargantuan stocks controlled by the Commodity Credit Corporation are the major agricultural problem now facing the Congress. How to reduce them and how to prevent them from accumulating again makes other farm questions seem relatively minor. They are, of course, costly to store; the government now pays more for storage of unwanted cotton, grain, and other crops than it gives to farmers for soil-conserving practices. But much more worrisome is the effect of these stocks on the economic organization and unity of the free world, and on the income of American farmers.

## II

The Eisenhower administration first tried two approaches in its attempt to curb uncontrolled stockpiling; it pressed for slightly lower support levels, so that the incentive to farmers to produce unwanted commodities would not be quite so great, and it launched a vigorous sales campaign and giveaway program to get rid of as much of the stocks as possible. Congress, however, was still hostile to lower support levels, and the reduction the administration achieved was too small to produce any notable results. The vigor of the sales campaign abroad has antagonized many of our allies and other nations we are anxious to keep in the free world, but has not been strong enough to achieve a reduction in total stocks. In fact, during the first full year, CCC stocks increased by about one billion dollars.

A recent illustration of the high cost the United States is paying in order to sell a small amount of surplus stocks abroad is the \$85 million agreement negotiated last year with Japan. In response to pressure from rice growers, the United States offered Japan 100,000 tons of American rice as part of the agreement. The ill feeling this generated in the southeast Asian countries that traditionally furnish Japan with rice was not helpful to American diplomats who are trying their utmost to keep these countries from falling to the Commu-

nist block. Their job was made even more difficult when the Communist leaders on their good-will tour contracted to buy rice from Burma where stocks of unsold rice have been causing much concern. This was typical of incidents elsewhere in the world.

One European economist has said that a competitive world is fine. European farmers should and can compete with American farmers; no one, however, can compete with the overpowering wealth of the American treasury. American farm products are being forced into foreign markets by every conceivable device, many of them devices we have deplored when used by other countries. They have done a great deal to erase the very fine impression created on the people of other nations by our international aid programs. And at the same time that we are forcing our farm products on other nations, we have been making it increasingly difficult for them to sell to us, even to the extent of imposing quotas on the import of some commodities into the United States, although our general government position has been vigorously against the use of this type of quantitative restriction.

It may be a cardinal American virtue for the individual firm to use an aggressive approach to opening up new markets abroad; it is another thing for the government of the United States to debase its power and prestige by becoming a traveling salesman and price cutter. It is not clear that the President and Congress realize the ambiguity of a domestic policy directed toward taking the government out of business, and a foreign program which makes the United States the world's biggest dealer in agricultural commodities in harmful competition with private dealers of other countries. However, the President has recognized in his message of January 9 the way in which great government stocks depress markets at home.

Just as the very existence of large supplies, with continuing uncertainty as to how the government proposes to dispose of them, makes traders in other nations unwilling to carry stocks for fear the market may be broken at any time, so do the stocks act as a ceiling on prices at home. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that the average level of farm prices today is from



10 to 20 per cent lower than it would be if stocks were normal. It does no good for the Secretary to put stocks into a national stockpile, or for the Congress to say that wheat, or cotton, or corn owned by the government can only be sold at the support level plus 5 per cent plus a reasonable charge for storage. What Congress has done Congress can undo. Nor is it possible for the administration to use that favorite device of surplus disposal, the so-called noncompetitive channel, without repercussions on the market. There are no noncompetitive channels in a country that has any semblance of free markets; I am not sure that noncompetitive channels exist even in such a completely controlled economy as that of the Soviet Union.

### III

Whatever the reasons, the President and the Secretary have come to recognize the grave importance of the surpluses, and the soil bank proposal, which is the principal feature of the President's agricultural program for 1956, is a frontal attack on that problem. Removal of surpluses of the size we now have is a job calling for an attack of heroic proportions. It remains to be seen whether the Benson-Eisenhower soil bank program will be heroic enough, first to break and remove the fetters that will almost certainly be wound around it by congressional representatives from the wheat and cotton states, and second to remove the depressing effect of the monumental stocks on domestic and foreign prices.

In essence the proposal is simple, and has little that is new. Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Benson propose to pay farmers to hold land out of cultivation, and to plow under growing crops of cotton and wheat, just as Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Wallace did in 1933. The novelty of the proposal stems from the fact that this acreage reduction is to be in addition to all other existing restrictions on production, that it is to last for at least four years, and that it is inspired primarily by the great government holdings of farm crops. Removal of present surpluses will only solve the short-range problem, of course, and long-range solution must depend on changes in the legislation that called the surpluses into being in the first place.

Specifically the soil bank plan calls for retirement of land from production by two devices, the acreage reserve program and the conservation reserve program.

Under the acreage reserve program farmers would be asked to hold idle during 1956, 1957, 1958, and 1959 part of the land they would otherwise be permitted to plant, under the acreage allotment system, to wheat, cotton, corn, and rice. They would not be permitted to harvest any crop from the acreage reserve or to graze any livestock on it. It would be completely idle. In order to obtain results as quickly as possible the President asks that farmers who have already planted their 1956 wheat and cotton crops when the program goes into effect be paid to plow under part of the growing crop so as to put land into the reserve. Farmers would be paid enough for land put in the acreage reserve to return them the net profit they could have made if a crop had been grown on it, plus a bonus. Payment would be made either in negotiable certificates redeemable in commodities in the CCC stockpile, or by funds obtained from sales from the stockpile.

Let us see how this might work for wheat, the largest item in the stockpile.

The total domestic consumption of wheat for food, feed, seed, and industrial purposes averaged 637 million bushels a year from 1951 to 1955, but tended to decline as high wheat prices reduced the amount fed to animals. Total consumption in 1955 appears to have been only 619 million bushels. But it is probably safer to use the larger figure. To this may be added wheat for foreign sale. Net wheat exports have declined from 475 million bushels in 1951 to 275 million bushels in 1955, despite the strenuous selling and giveaway program. Let us assume, however, that the Department of Agriculture will be able to maintain exports at the 1955 level. Total requirements then would amount to 912 million bushels.

The wheat acreage allotment for 1956, that is, the amount of wheat farmers may harvest and still be eligible for price support loans, amounts to 55 million acres. If production from this area averages 15 bushels an acre, as it did from 1951 to 1955, it will



total 825 million bushels. Production would fall short of requirements by 87 million bushels, and Commodity Credit Corporation stocks could be reduced by that amount.

But wheat stocks now owned by the CCC amount to about 900 million bushels, plus another 200 million bushels on which the CCC has loaned the support price and to which it will eventually take title, or a total of about one billion bushels. Reduction of only 87 million bushels, less than 9 per cent, is not much. At that rate it would take over eleven years to work off the reserves.

Furthermore, if average production were not 15 bushels per acre (the five-year average) but 17 bushels per acre as it was in 1955, production would be greater than requirements by 23 million bushels, and stocks would increase. In fact, an acreage allotment of 55 million acres, at present support prices, should result in production roughly in balance with requirements.

The President has proposed that the wheat plantings be reduced about one-fifth below the present acreage allotment and that the 11 million acres taken out of wheat should not be planted to any other crop. If the land put in the acreage reserve is of average productivity, wheat production should be reduced by one-fifth, or between 165 and 185 million bushels, and the wheat stocks of the Commodity Credit Corporation could be drawn down one-sixth. After four years of this program, stocks would have fallen from one billion bushels to 330 million bushels, still large, but not dangerously so.

Now what of the cost? Presumably it can be estimated by computing the value of the wheat that was not grown, less the cost that would have been incurred in growing it. If we assume an average yield of 15 bushels an acre, and a price of \$1.80 per bushel, the support level proposed for 1956, the wheat not grown would have been worth \$27 per acre. At an average yield of 17 bushels it would have been worth \$30 an acre. So much is easy, but estimating the direct costs of producing an acre of wheat proves more difficult. Apparently the average cost for the United States, excluding rent and overhead charges, is about \$17 an acre, leaving an average net return of from \$10 to \$13 an acre. If we add to this a bonus of

25 per cent, the cost per acre for the land put in the wheat acreage reserve would be about \$12 to \$16, and total cost for 11 million acres would be from \$132 million to \$176 million a year.

This estimate is extremely crude, but I doubt that we should have too much confidence in estimates made by more refined methods. How much it will cost to retire 11 million acres from wheat production can only be determined by trial and error.

Estimates arrived at in a similar fashion for the cotton program show an annual cost of about \$220 million. Total stocks of cotton bear about the same relationship to annual consumption and exports as do wheat stocks, and it might therefore be expected that the acreage reserve plan for cotton would produce results comparable to the program for wheat. But unlike wheat, cotton production on the minimum acreage allotment has been running far in excess of requirements, as a result of unusually high yields. Furthermore, there is little reason to expect cotton yields to fall. The President has recommended, therefore, that cotton marketing quotas be set in terms of bales of cotton rather than the actual yield from an allotment acreage, so as to bring production into balance with supply.

I have not attempted to estimate costs for the corn and rice programs, but would expect them to be lower, because corn growers in recent years have been little interested in acreage controls, and because rice acreage is relatively small. But these two programs might cost another \$100 million.

If these estimates are at all reasonable, the acreage reserve program would cost about \$500 million a year, or \$2 billion for the four years of its operation. But it is very doubtful that this expenditure would achieve the desired reduction of the surplus. Farmers would almost certainly put their poorest land into the acreage reserve, land on which yields are well below the national average. Furthermore, the program would probably be more attractive to farmers in regions where yields are low and direct costs relatively high, as in the semiarid wheat belt for example, than in the regions where yields are high and direct costs low. Instead of being one-fifth, the reduction in production might be as little as one-tenth.

The second part of the soil bank plan, the conservation reserve,



is not designed primarily to deal with farm surpluses, although it might have some effect on them; rather it is designed to transform into forest or permanent pasture land that is ill-suited for crop production. During the period of the acreage reserve, however, this land also would be withdrawn from production.

It is proposed to pay farmers the cost of establishing grass or forest on land going into the conservation reserve, and also to pay an annual rental charge per acre. The President has asked that 25 million acres be transformed in this fashion and estimates the cost at \$350 million a year. This works out to be \$14 an acre, or about the same as my estimate of \$12 to \$16 an acre for the wheat acreage reserve. Perhaps my estimates are too conservative.

It is not at all clear what effect the conservation reserve would have on agricultural production. Twenty-five million acres is approximately 7 per cent of all cropland in the United States, but land destined for the conservation reserve is supposedly only the least productive and probably does not contribute much to total output. There is certainly little ground for expecting the conservation reserve to reduce the surpluses substantially.

If the Eisenhower-Benson program is adopted for 1956, it will mean that farmers will receive government checks for about \$850 million, in addition to \$250 million to be paid under the old Agricultural Conservation Program. This helps to explain the favorable reception the soil bank has so far received. Furthermore, the \$500 million that the acreage reserve program would cost is essentially a paper cost inasmuch as the necessary funds would be obtained from the sale of government-owned wheat, cotton, corn, and rice, at prices considerably higher than their present value. (No one knows how much the stocks are worth now; that they are worth much less than was paid for them is certain. In fact, their value may be negative, when account is taken of their depressing influence on prices, the difficulties they make for us in the cold war, and the amount it costs to store them.)

In the four years 1956 to 1959 the soil bank might cost about \$3,400 million. The maximum reduction in inventories that it can be expected to achieve is \$4,300 million, on the assumption that

stocks of wheat, cotton, corn, and rice would be reduced by two-thirds. For reasons I have already given this seems optimistic. But if the program could be continued until stocks were brought down to reasonable proportions, and if at the same time a program were adopted that would prevent such stock accumulations in the future, we might get out of a bad situation at not too high a cost.

#### IV

There is, of course, an easier, and quite possibly a cheaper way to do the whole job. If all that is desired is a two-thirds reduction of stocks of four commodities, if all we want is to get rid of \$4 billion worth of corn, wheat, cotton, and rice, this can be done at not too much additional expense by burning them or by dumping them into the ocean. We would then cut storage costs by perhaps \$200 million a year, and be saved the burden of administering the complicated reserve programs. Or, if destruction seems too awful to contemplate, Admiral Byrd suggests that we stock our farm surpluses in Little America, where cost of storage is almost zero.

But is destruction so horrible, in a world that has seen millions of dollars spent for airplanes that will not fly, that tears down multi-million-dollar buildings to replace them with new ones, and that destroys and rebuilds highways almost as soon as they are completed? Is it much different from turning back into wasteland 40 or 50 million acres that could be used to produce food, feed, and fiber that would be consumed? For make no mistake, it would be consumed, just as the tremendous CCC stockpile would be consumed if it were not sterilized by act of Congress.

Throughout the history of farm price legislation, we have had a pronounced tendency to become so fascinated with new schemes, and with new names for old schemes, that we have often followed circuitous paths toward our goals when direct paths were open. We have had export debentures, two-price plans, equalization fees, ever-normal granaries, surplus disposal programs, soft-currency sales and soil banks, to name only a few. All appear to have been intended to do one or both of two things: to raise farm incomes, and to reduce the risks in farming. If these are indeed our goals, why not



achieve them directly and be done with government controls and government-owned surplus?

If there is need to guarantee farmers a minimum income, and to assure them of generally more favorable incomes than they now have, this could be done quite simply through the income tax. To raise incomes of those farmers who produce 95 per cent of all crops and livestock, all that is necessary is to grant them special income tax exemptions, just as we do for the blind and for persons over 65. If it is desired to go further, and to put a floor under farm incomes, this could be done by deficiency payments made to all farmers whose net income is less than their total exemptions.

It is not at all clear that subsidization of farmers' incomes is desirable—I would argue that it is not—but if the Congress believes it to be, this is probably the best way to accomplish it.

The whole question of how well-off farmers are, or how poor they are, is very much confused by the differences in living costs in farm and city, and by the presence in agriculture of some two million farms that produce only an insignificant part of total farm output. The Census now makes a distinction in its statistics between these two million farms and the two and a half million commercial farms, but it does not give net income figures for the two. By examination of other data, particularly data on value of farm products sold, however, we can arrive at a crude estimate that per capita income on the commercial farms is at least as high as it is for the economy as a whole. Commercial farmers, then, do not appear to need to be subsidized, although some of the noncommercial farmers may. Under the present price support program, only the commercial farmers are subsidized, because only they have something to sell.

Statistics showing the course of farm incomes in the past few years are likewise confusing. Farm prices in 1955 were about 22 per cent below the peak they reached during the Korean war, and net farm income is down 28 per cent. On the other hand, because of the continuing decline in the farm population, and because many workers in other industries are also part-time farmers, the income per capita is down only 7 per cent, and is still well above income for the years 1947 to 1949. Farm real estate prices in 1955 were at an

all-time high, and had increased 10 per cent between July 1954 and July 1955. There is no clear evidence of farm depression.

The other objective of price policy is the reduction of risk, and it probably is justified. It should be possible to develop a government-sponsored insurance program that would provide protection both against undue income decline and against low yields because of adverse weather. Such a program might be subsidized entirely by the federal treasury, or it might be partially self-financing. It would involve no restriction on production or hoarding of stocks. Instead, when prices were below guaranteed levels, farmers would receive benefit payments, in cash, for the difference.

If pressed, I would also suggest that parity be redefined to satisfy the economists' notion of fair price, that is, the price that is just high enough to call forth the commodities society wants, and in the quantities wanted. But perhaps I go too far.

If our price and income policy for agriculture were to be implemented by direct payments, no matter what the level of support, it would be much easier to dispose of the CCC surpluses. They could be sold, and would be used. It would be quite feasible to plan in advance to sell all of the stocks over a period of eight or ten years at market prices, releasing them to the market at a constant rate and letting them find their way into consumption.

But perhaps all our concern over farm surpluses is unnecessary. At the rate the population of the United States is growing, it may be that in a few years production will fall into balance with consumption. The Department of Agriculture estimates that by 1960, with increased population and increased income, the demand for farm products will be 10 per cent greater than now. And if farm population continues to decline, as it almost surely will, the increased demand will be supplied by fewer and fewer farm people. If production were not hampered by administered prices and physical restrictions so that farmers would produce more of the things that are wanted and less of the things that are not wanted, output and consumption might well be in balance, and farmers' incomes considerably higher than they are now.

# THE INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM

*by Leslie A. Fiedler*

THE intellectual and anti-intellectual not only come into existence at the same moment, but they are inventions of the same mind, the divided mind of the intellectual himself. Needless to say, the enemies of the intellectual invent nothing; they do not even have a name of their own aside from the epithets flung at them contemptuously from time to time by their opponents: philistines, booboisie, and so forth. It is their fate to live on the discarded notions of those whom they despise, converting tortured insight into smug banality; and even their self-consciousness is arrived at secondhand by this scavenging process. Perhaps the anti-intellectual is dimly aware of this irony or at least dimly resents it without real awareness; but it is not necessary for him to know it at all. As a matter of fact, it is juster and funnier that he thunder away against intellectuals in blithe ignorance of the truth that all his best invective was ghost-written for him before he was born by precisely the kind of mind he delights in abusing.

The intellectual, on the other hand, must endure the final indignity and joke of knowing that he himself has invented the whole anti-intellectual position. He must see the attacks against him, the fear and the violence, as projections of his own self-distrust on record in a thousand novels and poems which his opponents mysteriously absorb without reading. I do not mean to suggest, of course, that the intellectual must hamper his own defense by telling himself that "it's all his own fault!"—merely that he must not allow his justified indignation to blind him to the supreme irony of it all. For this irony he must abide as he abides all the others; and, indeed, this is his distinction among men, the essence of his vocation. Where allegiance exists in others—good citizens, good fathers, good rebels—irony exists in him. He is a terrible ally and the worst of friends.



We must be careful, I think, to reserve the honorable name of intellectual only to the ironical, though there is a growing tendency these days to bestow it on anyone who can read and write gracefully enough to earn the contempt of the vainly ignorant. No one else deserves the title, however, even if he is pilloried by the leading anti-intellectual of the moment. Not everyone martyred by Nero is a Christian; there are some who end up in the mouths of lions by mistake, and this must not be interpreted sentimentally as a sign of their election—not even if they cry out (having nothing further to lose) the name of the Lord.

No, the true intellectual is not faithful even to himself, much less to God; for he knows that any human commitment is a lie, and that even noncommitment, when it becomes a program, is hypocrisy. He does not think that only he is not a joke among the jokes of the world, merely that he is the last and best joke of all; and it is this sense of the ridiculousness even of his own predicament that is used against him by the literal-minded when he cannot resist writing it down. What really stirs the anger of the anti-intellectual is that his opponent evades even that last comforting platitude: "Those who are not for us are against us!"—for the intellectual is neither for nor against in the ordinary sense.

It is possible to love as well as hate the enemy who goes down crying out slogans equal and opposite to your own. By this very act he assures you of the reality of your cause, which is, after all, more important than its rightness or wrongness; but the intellectual dissolves in his irony the reality of the cause itself. The intellectual is the permanent revolutionist of the spirit; even as he straddles one barricade, the red flag in his hand, he is dreaming of the next, when he will raise the black. And worse than that, he is already in his mind writing the book that will reveal just how absurd he and his comrades looked waving the red flag or the black. It is not difficult to despise him; he finds it easy himself; and anyone who undertakes a defense of the intellectual must begin with this depressing realization rather than some melodramatic vision in which a clean and public-spirited Ivy-Leaguer (looking rather like Adlai Steven-

son) stands valiantly against an ill-shaven yahoo (looking not unlike Senator McCarthy).

It is not the witty and polished Adlai Stevenson one must imagine but the stuttering and seedy Jean Jacques Rousseau. Those who would defend one and not the other are only anti-intellectuals once removed. More is required of the intellectual's friend than loving "eggheads" with good grammar and good manners or despising those to whose manhood such grammar and manners seem a threat. What I mean when I use the word "intellectual" is not merely a person who thinks in public, but that new kind of thinking man produced out of the ferment of shallow rationalism and sentimentalism which shaped the ideology of the French Revolution and whose first embodiment was the truculently "anti-intellectual" Rousseau.

For many hundreds of years the mind of Europe functioned through the "clerk"; but the "clerk," pledged to the past and the Church, gave way briefly when that past and that Church were challenged by force, to the *philosophe*, committed to the future and to abstract Reason. Born with the *philosophe*, however, was a strange milk-brother, at first unnamed, who lived only for the present and for himself. Diderot called him "Rameau's Nephew" and portrayed him in a dialogue as half artist and half underground man, consumed by vanity and self-hatred; but God had already named him Jean Jacques. His contradictions are implicit in the historical moment that produces him; the disruption of the old hierarchies and the disappearance of the old centers undercut even the rationalists who had dreamed them, leaving the thinker alone and unsustained, his only relationship with the community one of challenge and mockery. But the same catastrophe breeds the dogmas of Democracy and Romanticism, the unwillingness to endure difference or distinction.

The intellectual begins by preaching against the surviving aristocracy an egalitarian creed that the middle class ends preaching against him. The theory that the kitchenmaid's by-blow is as good as the bastard of a king slips inevitably into the belief that the former is a damn sight better; that we are *all* better than anyone

else, especially those of us who are worse. One cannot unleash the notion that what was lower should be higher without somehow ending up with the idea that the only stability is in having everything in the middle. The heritage of the Revolution is the hatred of excellence; and that this does not *inevitably* follow is beside the point; in fact, it does. Depressingly enough, even when liberty and fraternity are subverted, equality, understood as leveling, somehow lives on, as it did under Napoleon and as it continues to do under the Jacobin totalitarianisms of fascism and communism—or, indeed, in the minds of our own McCarthys. The fear of distinction and the veneration of mediocrity are common links between governments united by nothing else. And how can the intellectual insist at this late date that when he attacked the aristocracy he meant only a corrupt aristocracy of blood and not the just one of sensibility and talent? He is not even sure that he did.

Moreover, the intellectual begins by raising against the artists who had turned themselves into purveyors of erotic entertainment for the court a demand for commitment which the middle class ends by turning on him. The proud call of David to his fellow painters to serve Reason and the Revolution becomes the pressure of Van Wyck Brooks or Archibald MacLeish against the “irresponsibles,” too proud and alienated to serve the “war effort.” The demand for spiritual commitment turns into a request for practical contributions: posters, movie scenarios, editorials in favor of democracy and against racial discrimination. And how can the intellectual protest at this point that when he advocated commitment he meant a commitment to what was not yet debased, a commitment *against* conformity? It is hard to remember just what he did mean.

He cannot (or at least should not) forget, however, that it was he who espoused against the respectable of another day the notion of the superiority of the “natural” to the “artificial,” the peasant to the courtier, the untutored heart to the overcultured head. For this, even more than for his espousal of egalitarianism and commitment, the intellectual must see himself as the father of anti-intellectualism. It was not only Rousseau, after all, who affected to distrust reason and looked nostalgically back toward the natural, but



a host of others, unlike in every respect except this: Diderot and Wordsworth, Whitman and Twain, Dostoevsky and Tolstoi. It is the last writer who gives the game away in a spasm of self-contempt and honesty, who reveals that the cult of the natural, the veneration of the peasant becomes finally antiart, antithought, antilife. The others, even Twain with his pose of the know-nothing abroad, exempted from their indictment of formal culture such sacred figures as Shakespeare and themselves; in *What Is Art*, Tolstoi begins with such fair game as the "obscure" decadents but ends by disavowing even *Hamlet* and his own *Anna Karenina*.

No embattled Midwestern congressman, to whom art equals communism and the taste of the "little man" is the court of final appeal, could go further; all that is left him is unconscious plagiarism. And what is the use of the intellectual's crying out after such a development that he meant originally to attack only that "culture" which had been hopelessly compromised by its allegiance to the false values of the past; that he had dreamed all along not the death of all culture but the emergence of a new one, finer and more outrageously honest. How does one ever know just what he does mean?

Even the maddening stereotypes of "the intellectual" and "the Bohemian" that haunt the bourgeois mind, the most sentimental and the most savage, were invented by the intellectuals themselves. In the works of the more passionate or hard-boiled worshipers of "Experience," in D. H. Lawrence, in Sherwood Anderson, in Hemingway himself, one finds caricatures of the intellectual that have served anti-intellectuals ever since: the intellectual as homosexual, as effete Jew, as intelligence without *cojones* or a connection with the soil. Especially in America, with the triumph of Midwestern realism, which is to say, with the victory of the provinces over the center, of improvisation over culture, there has grown up a gallery of parodies of the intellectual, parodies that have by some strange process of cultural osmosis oozed down into the popular mind.

Literary populism, emerging from the political variety, has bred a species of anti-intellectual intellectuals who equal in their voluntary vilification of their own confreres anything forced on the

Soviet writers by an officially sponsored "Social Realism." And there is no use pleading that this is only *one part* of the self-portrait of the intellectual. The middle class is willing enough to read the ambiguity of the intellectual as confusion and inconsistency; and besides it finds quite as much ammunition in the intellectual's favorable vision of himself as in the portraiture born of his self-hatred.

If one aspect of the Democratic-Romantic complex out of which the intellectual emerges leads to populism, another develops into dandyism. The Romantic, who, lying on his right side, dreamed himself the voice of the common man—the articulateness of the inarticulate—rolling over onto his left, endured the nightmare of himself as an outcast, cursed for his very sensibility and honesty, the lonely voice crying in a void. This nightmare he transmuted into art and life in an effort to seem to *choose* what had been thrust upon him. His exclusion he made a point of pride, his *raison d'être*, becoming the very personification of his outsidedness and exaggerating the viciousness imputed to him as a gesture of contempt for the bourgeois world.

In that role as acted out by Byron or half-lived, half-composed by Poe and completed by Baudelaire, the intellectual became everything the middle classes needed him to be, everything they longed and feared to become themselves: drunkard, seducer, dope addict, syphilitic, sadist—failure and poet. The failure of the intellectual was demanded by a world that thought it worshiped only success; as such intellectuals saw themselves, a hostile society saw them, too—for they are the consciousness of that society which can know nothing except through them. To be sure, what was for them evidence of their election was for that society a sign of depravity, but the vision remains the same though the judgment differs.

By themselves and by their enemies alike, the intellectuals came more and more to seem a separate class in a world that had learned from them to aspire to classlessness. Thinking of themselves as a nobility of talent and suffering, as "knights of infinite resignation," they attempted to constitute, at the very moment that the middle classes (taught by other intellectuals) had learned to hate all aristocrats, the world's last aristocracy. And before the dilemma posed

by this self-ennoblement, the contemporary intellectual still stands bewildered. How can he know whether he is finally betraying his own cause more flagrantly if, in his charcoal flannels and his university office, he cries out that he is not Edgar Poe; or if, in a shabby sweater and a cold-water flat, he plays the expected role of the futile Bohemian? He must be willing to despise himself in either case, first for choosing however he does and then for despising himself for it; for there is no way out of irony except into deeper irony. At least he must not content himself with righteously despising the anti-intellectuals and finding himself beside their grossness justified even to himself.

*Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed.*

—BLAISE PASCAL



# WILLIAM FAULKNER'S VISION OF GOOD AND EVIL

*by Charles A. Allen*

WILLIAM FAULKNER'S subject is Everyman's good and evil. His earlier protagonists rarely theorize on man's dual nature, but the didactic heroes of the later stories and novels are quite vocal on the subject. In the earlier work, so lavish in its variety of workaday types—farmers, sheriffs, horse traders, school teachers, etc.—the characters make little pretension to intellectuality. For the most part they feel and act rather than think. They are ordinary men and women, young and old, Negro and white, and stand for the life of a particular region. More importantly they symbolize the world—the truth about man. The didactic hero is a different sort:

The defense lawyer is Gavin Stevens, about fifty. He looks more like a poet than a lawyer and actually is: a bachelor, descendant of one of the pioneer Yoknapatawpha County families, Harvard and Heidelberg educated, and returned to his native soil to be a sort of bucolic Cincinnatus, champion not so much of truth as of justice, or of justice as he sees it, constantly involving himself, often for no pay, in affairs of equity and passion and even crime too among his people, white and Negro both,

sometimes directly contrary to his office of County Attorney which he has held for years . . .

Thus Faulkner introduces his hero of *Requiem for a Nun* (1951). Gavin Stevens is also the hero, a didactic and symbolic hero, of *Intruder in the Dust* (1948) and *Knight's Gambit* (1949). His only vices are a nervous impatience with lesser minds, and a vernacular garrulity. He reads books, plays chess, smokes a ten-cent corncob, and takes a fatherly interest in all the inhabitants of his domain. As a hero, he is curiously like the Allied commander-in-chief of *A Fable* (1954). And, with few reservations, he is Isaac McCaslin of the novelle "The Bear" and the story "Delta Autumn."

From the beginning, the Faulkner didactic hero has tended to be not so much a well-rounded character as a symbolic spokesman for truth and justice. This tendency to fashion the hero as an abstraction, as a kind of morality play figure, is at its strongest in the last three books, and is especially noticeable in *A Fable*. The thrice-resurrected English corporal of the latter novel, despite his twelve

disciples, his last supper, and his betrayers, is little more than a mouth-piece for the verities of peace and love—the highest truths in the didactic hero's hierarchy of values. The co-hero, father of the corporal and Allied commander-in-chief during World War I, despite his medals, black limousine, and busy military decisions, is little more than a spokesman for Caesar's wisdom.

The virtues of the hero—beyond his dedication to peace and love—are patience, pride, compassion, courage, fortitude, humility, and "love of justice and liberty." Such goodness demands admiration, makes possible Faulkner's central theme: faith in man. The Allied commander-in-chief perhaps best expresses the meaning.

"I don't fear man. I do better; I respect and admire him. And pride: I am ten times prouder of the immortality which he does possess than ever he of that heavenly one of his delusion. Because man and his folly—"

"Will endure," the Corporal said.

"They will do more," the old General said proudly. "They will prevail."

The virtues of the didactic hero are also prominent in the comic hero, but the comics are men of folly, somewhat erring human beings. Usually, as with the tall convict of *The Wild Palms* (1939) or as with Cash Bundren of *As I Lay Dying* (1930), they are fallible because of their obsessive-compulsive rigidity. Despite their fortitude, courage, patience, etc., both the convict and Cash are lack-

ing in emotional flexibility, inexorably tied to their defensive logic, to their furious and hostile need for order and serenity. Their comic flaw is of a neurotic nature. A more traditional, and perhaps more comprehensible fallibility, is the overconfidence of V. K. Ratliff, the affable sewing machine man of *The Hamlet* (1940).

The central situation in *The Hamlet* is the rise of the Snopeses and the fall of the Varners. Will Varner, head man around Frenchman's Bend as the novel opens, is gradually tricked out of wealth and power by Flem Snopes and a band of his predatory relatives. Ratliff observes and comments on the action, and gradually becomes involved, partly out of an urge to protect the weak from exploitation and partly out of a need to outwit Flem. Although Ratliff wins several rounds or at least fights Flem to a draw, he is finally tricked into buying a piece of property which Flem has "salted" with buried treasure.

In contrast to most of Faulkner's comic heroes, Ratliff is emotionally flexible, mentally quick, consciously witty, and affectionate rather than hostile. He enjoys people and generously befriends them, exemplifies peace and reasonableness, and is not especially interested in preaching his morality or crusading against injustice, although he does warn the countryside against Snopes's nefarious schemes and intercedes to protect an idiot Snopes from the exploitation of his kinsman. But Ratliff's measure

of heroism can be gauged not so much by his particular actions as by his unostentatious morality. By implication he stands, despite his folly, not only for the morality and truth and justice of Gavin Stevens or the other didactic heroes of the late stories and novels but also for the whole pantheon of American values. Through pride and greed, mainly pride, he loses money and dignity, mainly dignity, in his tournament of wits with Flem Snopes. But because he accepts his humiliation with good humor, he is not inglorious in his fall. His partner Bookwright, who continues to dig madly for the treasure long after everyone else has recognized Flem's victory, is a foil to Ratliff's sweet reasonableness.

Ratliff and several other characters of *The Hamlet* are universal types. These types, not only in the comedy but in the melodrama and tragedy as well, are arranged in dramatic contrast with one another. Each becomes a foil for an opposite and in consequence each gains in clarity and memorability. Ratliff's humanity, for example, is highlighted by everyone else's inhumanity. The juxtaposition of universal types is always an important part of Faulkner's method; it strengthens not only his characterization but his humor, and his tone, and it helps him blend his elements into a final artistic effect. This effect in *The Hamlet* and in most of Faulkner's best work is, I believe, predominantly a matter of tone, of the author's attitude toward his materials. Compounded of satire

and solemnity, respect and admiration, anger and acceptance, compassion and love, it forms an emotional texture for Faulkner's usual theme: man's paradoxical nature, his capacity for simultaneous good and evil, his dangerous and noble predicament.

Faulkner has several notions about the origins of good and evil. His didactic heroes, like Cooper's and Twain's, often threaten to become blazing emblems of the American faith in the natural goodness of natural man. For example, Gavin Stevens agrees with Temple Drake in *Requiem* when she affirms: "They're really innately, inherently gentle and compassionate and kind." But although Faulkner often has his hero attribute man's nobility to instinct, he generally shows virtue as a result of cultural influence—social traditions, or, more specifically, parental influence. Ike McCaslin of "The Bear" (1942) is primarily disciplined by his tutors, especially the old half-Indian, half-Negro hunter Sam Fathers. One of Gavin Stevens' main tasks in *Intruder* and *Gambit* and *Requiem* is that of exemplifying and teaching morality to the young.

If man is not really born good, neither is he born bad. He is made evil by hostile parents, or by cruel institutions and codes—or, usually, by both. "Which proves again," Gavin informs his disciple Charles Mallison of *Intruder*, "how no man can cause more grief than that one clinging blindly to the vices of his ancestors." Hostile parents and so-



cial institutions combine to explain the belligerence of the protagonists in the best novels, such as *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying*, *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), *Light in August*, and *The Hamlet*.

Consider *Light in August*. Racial prejudice, harsh Calvinistic religious attitudes, and other benighted social conditions pressure the three protagonists of the novel into hostile molds; more immediately the three are pounded by the cold rigidity of their parents. Joe Christmas is driven to murder by such a combination of forces: kills his foster father and slits the throat of his mistress Joanna Burden, and indirectly causes the death of Gail Hightower.

Chapter II introduces Christmas. "There was something definitely rootless about him, as though no town nor city was his, no street, no walls, no square of earth his home. And that he carried his knowledge with him always as though it were a banner, with a quality ruthless, lonely, and almost proud." The origin of Joe's insecurity is the main subject of a hundred pages of the novel. It is a heart-rending record of childhood humiliation. From the scene where the five-year-old orphan eats toothpaste to the scene where the twenty-year-old kills his foster father McEachern, Joe is denied and victimized by the adult world. Since he is rarely given security, understanding, love, he is frustrated, made anxious and defensive, thoroughly hostile.

Faulkner dramatizes Joe's frustrations through a series of scenes that

cluster around the ages of five, eight, twelve, fourteen, eighteen, and twenty. Each of them reveals a thwarting of the boy's physical, emotional, intellectual, and social needs. The child is whipped, overworked, isolated from companions, and thoroughly trampled on by the religious and sexual bigotry of old McEachern. But despite this harshness, it is Mrs. McEachern who most thoroughly antagonizes the boy. Her hesitant, selfish gestures of good will, her "soft kindness," he "hated worse than he did the hard and ruthless justice of men. She is trying to make me cry. She thinks that they would have had me." Joe's rigid refusal to cry for the McEacherns is a defensive pride. It becomes a pervasive contempt for all mankind, male and female, Negro and white. This refusal forecasts Joe's adult rootlessness, forecasts his flight down countless roads of hostility. It accounts for the murder of his father and Joanna Burden, and accounts for his final despair, his recognition of the futility of his life.

The origins of anxiety and defense in Gail Hightower and Joanna Burden are also probed. Joanna never felt close to either of her aging parents; she tells little about her mother and reveals an ambivalent respect and fear for her New England father. A rigid fanatic on religion and Negro amelioration, he terrifies the young girl into the pattern of his own obsessions. Hightower is also the victim of aging "phantom" parents. His father "was an enemy"; as for the memory of his mother, "if on the day

of her death he had been told that he had ever seen her otherwise than in bed, he would not have believed it." Mother and child lived "like two small, weak beasts in a den, a cavern, into which now and then the father entered . . . crouching beside the bed the child could feel the man fill the room with rude health and unconscious contempt, he too as helpless and frustrated as they." Unable to warm himself from his parents, Hightower defensively turns to the ghost of his Civil War grandfather. Thus, despite his neurotic need for detachment and "peace," he lives out his life to the accompaniment of the "wild bugles and the clashing sabres and the dying thunder of hooves."

Obviously there is violence in *Light in August*, as there is in much of Faulkner's work. But it is not a violence, in this novel or elsewhere, used illegitimately. Joe, born on Christmas Eve, killed and mutilated at thirty-three, is another crucified victim of the world's evil, as well as an instigator of evil. One meaning of the novel is that hostile behavior perpetuates itself from father to son. The subplot, the idyllic love story of Byron Bunch and Lena Grove, so mellow and humorous, is no doubt designed to suggest that the good is also perpetuated from father to son, although the author does not as convincingly explore this possibility as he does in "The Bear" or *Intruder*. In general Faulkner is at his best—most dramatic and most thoughtful—when he is exploring evil rather than good. This, partly, is why the novels from *Intruder* onwards are

less impressive than those of the 1930's.

How does the individual Faulkner character discover what he is, how he came to be that way, what others are like, what good and evil are? "Anybody could know the truth; all they had to do was just to pause, just to stop, just to wait," observes Miss Eunice Habersham of *Intruder*. As she makes clear in her action, the pausings must be frequent and the waitings long. Discovery is arduous: a simultaneous forcing of the mind, will, and emotion, an entangled process of furious graspings and skittish evasions. The result is never for any character a complete truth. The victory, if it comes, is always limited, and this is the primary meaning of Faulkner's language and method. The looping, roiling prose of portions of *Intruder* or *Light in August* often suggests mental activity and feeling, psychological rather than objective reality. (Parenthetically, Faulkner has several styles: there are four in *The Sound and the Fury*.)

Who is Joe Christmas, after all? Joe sees himself and is viewed by all the others. The truth that emerges is a greater one than any one viewer can announce. Late in the novel Gavin Stevens suddenly appears as a psychological and philosophical interpreter (to serve much the same function as Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury*, or Cash Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*), but even Gavin's truth is not the author's, as Faulkner's ironic tone implies. Because Gavin is simply another character, because he is treated with a skeptical, ironic

tone, there is the higher truth of the omniscient author; there is no easy truth about Joe's evil. For implicit in the evil is a large and disturbing question. Is there not, possibly, something admirable in Joe's struggle to define a meaning for himself and to search out a role which society will accept? In brief, and to drive the question to its ultimate, are good and evil even conjectural possibilities in themselves? Can one exist without the other? So ancient and so ever new, this question must stand as the final meaning of *Light in August* and of much of Faulkner's work. Perhaps Nancy Mannigoe of *Requiem* speaks the meaning as openly as any character: "You aint got to [sin]. You can't help it. And he knows that too. He don't tell you not to sin, he just asks you not to. And he don't tell you to suffer. But he gives you the chance. He gives you the best he can think of, that you are capable of doing and he will save you." Although Faulkner would deny Nancy's religious faith, he shares her conviction of man's vulnerability to sin. He shares, too, Nancy's conviction that man must recognize and accept his "doomed and damned" nature. Without acceptance he cannot expiate, renounce, and live the good life.

Faulkner's view of man is as acceptable to the contemporary psychologist as to the ancient poet. To use one of Ike McCaslin's favorite words, "circumstances" frustrate everyone, create anxiety and unrealistic defense. And other circumstances create security, attitudes of

love. Everyone is a paradox of good and evil. It is the balance of the two forces within the individual and within a given society that matters. Thus Gavin Stevens—here surely speaking for Faulkner—insists "that little children, as long as they are little children, shall be intact, unanguished, untorn, unterrified."

The paradox of man's nature is a universal truth, not just a truth of contemporary northern Mississippi. Individual or mob, past or present, everything points the same way. Thus in *A Fable* the mob is unpredictable; twice supports justice and truth, and once does not. And so with the individual characters in the fable of the present, and so with the fable of the past, of Christ and Pilate two thousand years ago in Judea. There is always man's infinite capacity for good and evil. This counterpointing of individual, mob, and history runs throughout Faulkner's fiction, notably in "The Courthouse" and "The Jail" of *Requiem*, the diary of "The Bear," the Biblical allusions of *The Sound and the Fury*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *Light in August*. It is the structural principle that ties together a hundred and fifty years of county history.

Neither Faulkner's language nor his method, then, can be separated from his attitude toward man's capacity for good and evil. All the elements of his art are ultimately bent to a conviction that man, despite his thralldom to "circumstances," possesses enough capacity for self-determination not only to endure, but to prevail with dignity and pride.



# FIN DO MUNDO

*by Sue Davidson*

**T**HIS is a story about how I nearly went East to live. I'm not really satisfied with this as a statement of what the story is about. Probably I ought to say it's about how I lived with a girl called Anice, only Anice and I had been living together for six months before the important part of the story takes place. So I might as well let the first statement stand—it's the closest I can come to it.

I am a painter, twenty-four years old, and I live in San Francisco, Cal. I came here from Pomona four years ago, and since then I haven't done anything except paint. I mean, of course I have to take a job from time to time so that I can eat and pay my rent. Once in a long while I sell a canvas, and I also get a little money from my mother, who is in favor of my being a painter. She used to paint water colors herself. It's true they are lousy water colors, but that's how I originally became interested in art.

I met Anice for the first time about two and a half years ago. At that time she was married to a big, black-haired painter named Donovan, whose work I knew and liked very much. I knew Anice and Donovan casually, to speak to. I used to run into them at places where painters hang out here, such as Twelve Adler Place and The Paper Doll; and sometimes I would see them at parties. Occasionally at these parties Anice would play the guitar and sing folk songs. She'd picked up a lot of unusual folk songs traveling in the South with Donovan when he was in the army; and she had a nice way of singing them, throwing back her head and drawling out the words. Anice has large brown eyes and pale freckled skin and wavy, light brown hair which at that time was long on her shoulders. She has one of those long, angular faces that you expect to go with a long angular body, only Anice has a beautiful body and shapely arms and legs. Except for playing the guitar and singing she was pretty quiet, and she impressed me in those days as a pleasant enough person who might seem intelligent only because she said so little.

Actually, this is more or less the case. Not that Anice is stupid or anything, but like many quiet people, she does give the impression of understanding a lot more than she really understands or even cares about.

About a year after I first met them, I heard from somebody that Anice and Donovan had broken up, but it wasn't exactly vital information to me. I went on seeing Donovan around, but not Anice. Then one night a friend of mine asked me to come along with him to a party. He didn't say whose, he just said some chicks who had an apartment in the North Beach district were having a party, and that they'd probably have some "pot" on hand. "Pot" is what they call marijuana here. I do not use it myself, but I hadn't anything else to do, so I went along.

I wouldn't have recognized Anice at all if she hadn't spoken to me. What I did recognize, right off, were Donovan's paintings, of which there were a great many crowding the walls of the bed-sitting room. The room was very smoky and full of people. They were almost all the creepy-arty kind, and I would have cut out right away if it hadn't been that I was enjoying looking at Donovan's paintings and wondering how so many of them came to be here. Donovan's paintings do not sell cheap, so I figured that whoever lived in the apartment must be a friend of his, and I was a little surprised that he'd have a close friend among this crowd. Then, through the smoke, I saw a girl sitting on a low couch, holding a cigarette and listening to something a fellow with a yellow ascot around his neck was saying to her. There was something vaguely familiar about the attitude of her head and the posture of her arm, but I still wouldn't have known her if she hadn't at that moment happened to look up and see me. She said, "Hello there, Steel," and then I remembered her voice and realized who she was.

She looked terrible. She had lost maybe ten pounds and her figure was not the way I recalled it. It would, at this point, have matched her face, except that her face was now more thin and angular than ever. She had cut her hair like a boy's, and that hungry face was exposed in a way that wasn't becoming. What's more, instead of having on one of the soft, feminine, pastel kinds of dresses I

remembered her as always wearing, she was all tricked out in the men's clothing—peg-topped slacks, narrow suede belt, white dress-shirt under a sloppy sweater—worn by the Lesbians in this crowd. We call a Lesbian a “dike” here. I don't know if that's what you call them back East.

I was pretty shocked. I guess my face must have showed it, because Anice mumbled, “Long time no see,” and looked down at her hands. Then she introduced me to the fellow she had been talking with. After a few minutes he excused himself and went away. I sat down next to Anice and began to talk with her.

She told me she had quit her job, which had been in welfare work. So far as I could tell, she was spending all her time smoking pot, eating practically nothing, and hanging around with this crowd of dikes. Now, this particular crowd of dikes considers themselves very intellectual and far-out, and you can take my word for it that they are the world's worst. I mean, almost every one of them considers herself a great thinker or artist or writer who can't get anywhere because society takes it out on them for being dikes. The truth is, they are largely phonies, and I suspect that being dike hasn't got much to do with the fact that they can't get anywhere.

Well, Anice was trying to go dike, and it was an awfully weird thing to see. I mean, Anice just isn't the type, no matter what kind of clothes she puts on or how she cuts her hair. As she talked to me, she was trying to let her cigarette dangle from her lip the way the dikes do it, but the smoke kept getting into her eyes and making them water and run. And she was attempting to use the tough kind of vocabulary the San Francisco dikes use; but she blushed practically every time she used one of those short words you don't find in the dictionary. If it hadn't been so pitiful it would have been almost funny.

It made me feel terrible. I don't have any objection to dikes if that's the way they feel about it, but I couldn't see why a girl like Anice should get mixed up with them. Especially since it seemed obvious to me that she wasn't very happy about it herself.

She was sharing the apartment with a little wizened, thirty-ish dike who was also a welfare worker—maybe that's how she and



Anice met, I don't recall. Eventually I came to know that their relationship was just Platonic; they were sharing the apartment like any two ordinary men or women might share an apartment. But I didn't know it then; and in the next couple of days I found myself hating that little dike. I thought of her and Anice as though Anice were some sort of fairy-tale princess, while the wizened little dike was the ugly dwarf or goblin who was keeping the princess under an evil spell. It bothered me so much that I couldn't paint. I'd been working on a portrait of this same friend who had taken me to the party, and I had thought it was going to be a really cool painting. But after that night I found myself more or less hating him, too, just because he knew the little dike casually and had nothing to say against her. It was ridiculous, but it changed my whole feeling about the painting, and I couldn't go on with it.

I admit that my own situation at this time wasn't so perfect, although it was better than Anice's. The truth is, I hadn't had a steady girl—or a chick of any kind, for that matter—for some time. Up until six months before this I had been living with a very nice-looking chick who was a dentist's assistant, but who had moved to Santa Barbara. Actually, I was lonely at this time, but I guess I had just been too busy painting to try to do anything about it.

At any rate, I couldn't get my mind off Anice, seeing her in my mind's eye under the spell of the goblin-dike. I didn't picture her the way I had seen her most recently; I pictured her as she had looked when she was still married to Donovan, playing the guitar, with her head thrown back and her long hair falling over her shoulders. At last, after about three days of this, I took the bull by the horns and called her up. I said, hello, and how are you, and how would you feel about going out tonight for a film or some beer, all very fast, before I could get embarrassed about it; and her voice came back over the wire, very drowsy, saying, "O.K., Steel. Sure. Fine." I knew the drowsiness in her voice meant she was smoking pot; so I told her several times to be sure to be ready no later than seven-thirty, in case we should want to catch a film. Then I hung up, feeling very excited.

For three days I had been thinking about Anice as she used to

look; so when I clanked around in my old 'forty-one Nash to pick her up that night, I had to adjust all over again to her short hair and her dike clothes; and at first I felt rather let-down. But not for long. Because except for her get-up she behaved that night like a perfectly normal girl. As we sat having a beer, she didn't bother to dangle a cigarette from her lip; in fact, she didn't smoke at all. We went to a film; and in the darkness of the theater I stretched my arm across the back of the seat and let my hand touch her shoulder, and she didn't move away. After the film we went somewhere else for another beer, and then we went to my studio. We spent the rest of the night there. It all happened very quickly—almost as though she had really been enchanted and I had broken the evil spell. Which in a way was true.

Sitting on the edge of my bed with the bedspread wrapped about her (she is very modest about her body), she told me about Donovan and herself. They were the same age, about two years older than me, and had been married for five years. They had been sweethearts since high school, which they attended in Glendale, and had gone to junior college together, as well as to Cal, where they were married in their senior year. After graduation, Donovan had gone into the army. Anice had followed him every place he was stationed—in fact, since he was not shipped overseas, they'd never been separated until now. Donovan had always painted—Anice called him a "born painter"—so when he got out of the army, they went to New York for a while and lived in Greenwich Village. Then they got tired of that—rather, Donovan got tired of it, because he could not get a show—and came to San Francisco. Donovan's paintings had had an immediate success here, and Anice was very happy.

Anice had painted a little bit, too, in college, but not seriously. She had never had a thought in her head except Donovan; and that, she said, had always been fine with Donovan, until about a year before. Then he began to complain that she was "smothering" him, that she must begin to develop some interests of her own, for her sake as well as his. Anice thought the answer to this was a baby; but Donovan didn't want a baby. So Anice had gone into child-welfare work, and had tried to paint again, and increase her musical skill, and read serious books; but it hadn't satisfied Donovan. He said

that underneath these activities she still wasn't doing anything except watching him and thinking about him, and that he just couldn't stand it. At last he said that he thought the only way she could become an independent personality was for them to get a divorce. After she had learned to live as a separate individual, he said, they could get married again.

I thought it was one of the most obvious cock-and-bull stories I'd ever heard; it seemed very obvious to me that the guy had simply wanted to cut out on her and hadn't had the guts to tell her so. But Anice had taken the whole thing straight. For about two months after she and Donovan were separated, she had worked harder than ever at becoming an independent personality. She had read more books, and had tried to make new friends, and had thrown herself passionately into her welfare work. But it was all a flop. She couldn't understand difficult books without Donovan's help; and she couldn't think of anything to say to the new people she invited to her apartment; and the only way she could make herself care about her welfare cases was by pretending that the children were hers and Donovan's.

So she had deliberately sought out some of the intellectual, arty dikes she had met here and there with Donovan. It seemed to her that Lesbians were women who were completely independent; she thought maybe she could learn independence from them. Besides which, with that body of hers, she was more or less continually bothered by men; and she thought that running around with the dike crowd would protect her from unwelcome advances. You see, she wanted to remain faithful to Donovan until he was ready to remarry her—that part wiggled me.

Well, you can judge how this experiment was working out by the state she had gotten into by the time I saw her at the party. The only way she had been able to go through with her attempt to be a Lesbian was by keeping her brain dulled every minute of the day. She knew that becoming a pothead or a lushhound was not what Donovan had meant when he told her to become independent; and she was desperate at the realization that she was slipping farther and farther away from her goal; but she no longer knew where to turn. She couldn't go home to Glendale. In the first place, she



didn't like Glendale; and in the second place, running home to her parents wasn't what Donovan meant by independence, either. So she just drifted. She said that she had thought about committing suicide, but hadn't had the courage.

I watched her sitting there on the edge of my bed in the gray morning light of the studio, with the bedspread wrapped around her. The bedspread did not cover her shoulders, which are very white, with a few freckles on them, and very beautiful. I got up from the chair where I was sitting and bent over and kissed the back of her shaved neck. I said: "You will have to let your hair grow."

She looked up at me. "All right," she said. Then she looked down at her hands. "You understand," she said, "I can't love you, Steel. I couldn't ever love anybody except—"

"I understand," I said, finishing it up in my own mind as "—except that son-of-a-bitch." Then I said, "How about some breakfast?" and she looked up, and laughed, and said, "O.K. Turn your back while I put on my clothes."

I guess I've never been as happy as I was that spring. I hadn't realized, I suppose, until then, how deadening it is to live without a woman, or how sick I was of the stupid kind of life I'd been leading in the hours I wasn't working. With Anice in the studio, I could sit down and read a book or a newspaper for as long as an hour. And when I drank, it was just for kicks, not to knock myself out. Anice and I went to a lot of films, because she likes them as well as I do, but we also did other things. We went swimming quite a bit at Ocean Beach—that is, in the Pacific Ocean. Anice is a good, strong swimmer and, unlike most chicks, prefers the ocean to a swimming pool. We also went for drives on week ends to places like Lake Anza or Muir Woods, taking a picnic lunch with us. Sometimes we played bridge with two painters I know who like to play bridge, and sometimes we had a big party with enough people to fill the studio, and Anice played her guitar and sang. Of all the songs she sang, the one I remember best is one that went something like this:

I play the banjo better now than him that taught me to,  
Because he plays for all the world, and I just play for you. . . .

I can't remember the rest of the words, but it had a very remarkable melody which I can still hum. Usually when Anice played and sang this song she looked directly at me, which is probably why I remember it so well. We also sometimes went out to listen to music, although our choice of spots was somewhat limited, since the best Dixieland is played at places where we'd be likely to run into Donovan.

But we only had a glimpse of Donovan once or twice; and I didn't think about him very often. That is, I did not think of him personally, in connection with Anice, although it is true that his painting had had some influence on my work. But I couldn't hate him for that. I thought my work was getting better, even if not many other people thought so, and I was painting a great deal, more than I had ever since that chick I told you about had cut out for Santa Barbara. As I said, I was very happy.

I thought Anice was happy, too. She did not turn back overnight into the way she'd been when I first used to see her with Donovan—in fact, she was never altogether like that again; but within a month she had found a new job, as a clerk at a downtown music store, and was eating normally, and had stopped smoking pot, even when we were with other people who used it. She gained some weight and began to get her figure back, and she wore the kinds of dresses I liked on her, and let her hair grow out. I forgot to say that Anice kicked the little thirty-ish dike out of the apartment they were sharing, which had been Donovan's and Anice's apartment originally. Although Anice lived at my studio now, she kept the apartment, partly because there wasn't room at my place for all her things, and partly in case her folks should pay her a surprise visit—naturally, they are very bourgeois and wouldn't at all have approved of our arrangement.

As spring turned into summer, Anice spoke less and less often of Donovan, although every once in a while she still felt it necessary to remind me that it was only a matter of time until she would remarry him. You see, she felt as though she had begun to make progress toward independence from him; and maybe what she was doing *was* what Donovan had in mind, although I doubt very much that he had

anything in mind except cutting out. She also occasionally felt it necessary to remind me that she didn't really love me. She would cup my chin in her fingers and look carefully into my face. "That nice face," she would say, "I'm so grateful for it." Then she would shake her head. "But love it, no. You do understand that, don't you, Steel?" Well, I didn't care what name she wanted to give it. It's only chicks who concern themselves with these sentimental definitions.

Everything went along fine, and I saw no reason why our arrangement shouldn't last a year, maybe even more, so long as we were both satisfied. And then, toward the end of that summer, Donovan married somebody else. He married some society chick from San Mateo and it was in all the papers, but of course we would have heard about it anyway from mutual acquaintances. Anice read about it in the *Chronicle* one day during her lunch hour. When I picked her up that night at the music store she handed me the newspaper, folded to show the wedding announcement, without saying anything. I read it, and I didn't say anything either—what could I say? We went out for dinner that night, and although Anice acted kind of subdued, she ate all right and seemed all right in general. That was on a Friday. The next day I went over to the museum to take a look at the Orozco exhibition that had just come in, leaving Anice at the studio. She said she wanted to wash her hair.

I didn't get back until about five o'clock that night. As I started up the outside stairs of the building, I saw coming down them a certain short, skinny guy who pushes not only pot but all the big stuff, too. I knew where he was coming from; I went up the stairs, fast.

That was the beginning. It started out with her going back to smoking pot and progressed to her quitting her job so that she'd have more freedom to smoke it. Then she began to fill the studio with the same creeps she had been running around with before she moved in with me. One night I came home from work (I had taken a job parking cars at the St. Francis Garage, since I was too upset by our situation to do any painting anyway) and there sitting on my couch two feet away from Anice was that ugly little dike she used to live



with. I nearly flipped, although to tell the truth I'd been half-expecting it. I said hello, and then I went into the kitchen and started rummaging around in the cabinets, making a lot of noise as though I was looking for something; and then I asked Anice would she come in a minute and help me find whatever it was I was pretending to look for. When she got into the kitchen I closed the door behind her and said, "What the hell is she doing here? For Christ sake send her back to whatever rock she lives under."

Anice looked at me, her eyes a little glazed, the way they usually were now. "I can't send her home," she said. "I invited her."

"Invited her?" I grabbed her by the shoulders. "Send her home," I said, "send her home right now, in a hurry." But she simply stared back at me without moving. I shook her shoulders. I felt kind of as though I was going crazy and my voice was loud enough to hear in the other room.

"Listen," I said, "listen, what's wrong with you? You're no dike, are you?"

Her voice was trembling when she answered. "I don't know," she said. "I don't know, I think I'd rather be a dike than what you call a 'chick.'" She began to cry.

"What?" I said. "What's that supposed to mean?"

The tears were running down her face. "You're just like Donovan," she said. "You are all alike. You're just like him, you don't really care anything about me, you just want to use me for your own purposes."

I really almost blew my stack, then, because I recognized this as dike propaganda. "Use" her! As though there'd been anything like sex between us for weeks and weeks! I shoved her away from me and rushed out of the place and didn't come back again until I'd gotten good and high. She wasn't there; and I thought maybe she had left for good. But she came back again, the next day.

And she continued to live at the studio and to have her friends over—dikes and potheads and phony painters and phony poets and phony philosophers—a lovely crowd.

You may ask me why I didn't throw her out—after all, it wasn't

as though she didn't have a place of her own. Well, the fact is that I don't know. Maybe I felt sorry for her—maybe I'd always felt sorry for her, even when I used to see her with Donovan, when she thought she was happy. Maybe I "loved" her, the way she "loved" Donovan—that sounds strange, but I suppose it is possible. Only I don't know for sure. I am not very good at analyzing things. I can't even analyze my own paintings, while other people—among them people I scarcely know—are always telling me what they mean.

But I told you at the beginning of this story that I nearly went East to live, and I suppose you are beginning to wonder about that. Well, this is how it happened.

One night in September I came home and found Anice in a condition she hadn't been in for a long time—that is, completely dead sober. I remember I had stopped off at the Chinese restaurant on the corner, and I was carrying two of those paper cartons full of chow mein, hoping that I'd be able to get Anice to swallow some of it. I can still see those two cartoons sitting on the kitchen table, with something leaking out of one of them, as Anice and I talked and let the food grow cold.

Donovan had been to see her. He was going to Europe for a couple of years and he wanted to see her before he left, see how she was. I have sometimes tried to imagine what his feelings must have been when he saw how she was, but perhaps he is not troubled by his feelings; or perhaps he didn't consider anything that had happened to her as his fault; and maybe it wasn't, for all I know. Anyway, she said that seeing him again had acted as a kind of shock-treatment on her, had made her realize what a bad way she was in, and had made her want to fight her way out of it. She said she now accepted the fact that things were over between her and Donovan.

Then she asked me: Did I think that things were over between us, too?

I said I didn't know, I supposed they weren't, if she didn't want them to be. She got up out of the kitchen chair where she was sitting and came over to me. I was leaning against the refrigerator. She grabbed one of my hands in both of hers.

"Steel," she said, "let's get out of here."

I glanced around. "What for?" I said. "It's a good studio."

"I mean out of San Francisco. I hate it here. I hate the people. I—I'm afraid of them, Steel."

I said: "Where'll we go?"

She didn't answer right away. She walked over to the sink and looked up at the wall where I had tacked some sketches of people in the waiting room of the Greyhound Bus Station, which I had later worked into a painting. She said, "Donovan thinks your work is very good. He was very impressed. He says you've come an awfully long way since that Sausalito show last year." Then she turned around and faced me. "Let's go to New York," she said. "It would do a lot for you. An artist ought to move around, not just stay stuck in one place." She looked down at her hands. "Anyway," she said, "that's what Donovan says. That's why he's going to Europe."

I thought: "—— Donovan!"

But then I began to think about it, and it didn't seem like such a bad idea. There wasn't any reason why I shouldn't see some other part of the country—I'd never been farther east than Reno. I didn't have anything to lose, really, except a little money, and I'd saved up quite a bit, the way I always do, to provide for the months that I don't have a job. I knew I could get a little more money from my mother, if I needed it to get settled in New York.

I looked at Anice, whose pale freckled face was flushed with color. I said, "Well, I don't mind, if you want. Let's cut."

It took us about a week to get ready to leave. I had to have the Nash fixed up; and Anice had to have her things packed and put into storage. She told her folks she wanted to drive to New York with a girl friend, and they very generously wired her a couple hundred extra dollars. We figured that would come in handy in case the Nash broke down.

We left early in the morning, on a Saturday, an unusually clear morning for San Francisco. As we drove across the Bay Bridge, the city looked very beautiful; and for a while I felt sort of sad about leaving it.

But once we got past Berkeley, I began to feel fine. Anice had her guitar in the front seat with her; and she began to cut up with



it, inventing a lot of silly songs about how we were going to New York and we were going to take the town by storm. We laughed a great deal, which was unusual. I mean, we had had some good times in those months, but we hadn't ever laughed much. Anice was wearing yellow shorts and a yellow blouse; she looked about fifteen years old. She had packed a big hamper full of food; so we had our lunch somewhere on the shores of Lake Tahoe, sitting on the grass under the trees. After that, we cruised around comparing the various Tahoe resorts; and then we drove on into Nevada.

Maybe if we hadn't run into that detour in Nevada, I'd be living in the East right now—with or without Anice, I don't know. Anyhow, toward sunset we came to some highway construction and had to turn off on a side road. It was narrow, and so full of holes that I thought the Nash was going to fall to pieces. We didn't get back to the highway until long after dark, and by then we were pretty unnerved—it had begun to rain, and we were low on gas. But about five miles past the highway junction we found a gas station open. We asked the station attendant how far it was to the next good-sized town. He said about fifty miles, but that if we wanted sleeping accommodations we could get them ten miles up, at the Fin Do Mundo Motel. We were both more than ready to sack out; so when I saw the sign at the side of the road—"Sleep Off the Highway. Fin Do Mundo Motel. You Will Want to Spend the Rest of Your Life"—I turned right onto the dirt road leading to it.

Well, it didn't look much like the kind of place you'd want to spend your life, from what we could see of it with the headlights—just one dilapidated row of dirty white, frame cabins crouched together in the sand, with a scraggly bush of some kind growing along the edge of the car park. Evidently not many other people thought it was a very good place to spend their lives, either, because there weren't more than two or three cars drawn up.

The proprietor of the place must have been in bed or else just getting ready to hit the sack—he came to the office door wearing a faded blue bathrobe and looking out-of-it, the way middle-aged people always do when you get them up at night. But he was very pleasant; he said we hadn't disturbed him in the least.

The cabin he showed us was just what you might have expected from the outside—dingy linoleum on the floor, mismatching pieces of furniture, an oil stove for heat. However, we weren't in a mood to be choosy. I said it would suit us fine, and I went out with him to sign the register, leaving Anice there beside the oil stove with her shoes off.

As I signed the register "Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Steel," I began asking the proprietor, just to make conversation, where he'd gotten that fancy name for the motel, and what did it mean, and was it Spanish, which was what it sounded like to me. But the proprietor said, no, it was Portuguese, and he'd taken it from the name of a place he had read about in *National Geographic*. It meant "World's End," he said; and this place in Portugal had been named that because it was so beautiful that no one who stopped there would ever want to go farther. It was sort of sad, this fellow trying to find a resemblance between a place like that one and his bunch of rundown cabins in the desert. I went back into the cabin feeling very depressed and sorry I'd asked him any questions.

Anice was already undressed when I came in. We hadn't had any supper; so we ate some sandwiches from the hamper and split a can of warm beer left over from lunch at Tahoe. We tried to make some jokes about the cheesiness of the cabin; but they fell flat. The gaiety of the morning seemed far away; in fact, everything we had shared up until this moment, good and bad, seemed far away, as though we'd lost our real selves somewhere on that dirt road leading to the Fin Do Mundo. It was a terrible feeling, and I was glad to shut out the lights and try to feel like my real self in the dark, or if not that, at least to sleep.

The lights had been off for about twenty minutes and I was just beginning to feel drowsy when I heard those sounds in the next cabin. I can't describe them except to say that they sounded like somebody retching—they were very sickening sounds. Anice heard them, too, and she said, "Some traveling salesman has had one too many."

The sounds went into a kind of gasp; and then we heard another sound: it was a kind of half-scuffling, half-tapping against the wall that separated us from the next cabin. I sat up in bed.

"Listen!" I said. The scuffle-tap, scuffle-tap against the wall came again. "Christ, that's creepy," I said. "Maybe I better go find out what's wrong."

Anice sat up, too. "Go find out?" she said. "You mean, break into the cabin?"

"Well," I said, "what if the guy is really sick and needs help?"

"How do you know? Maybe he's just drunk and will clobber you if you go barging in there." She wrapped her arms about herself. "Anyway—" Her voice shook a little. "Anyway, if he wanted help he would call for help, wouldn't he?"

I said, "I guess so."

We sat there in the dark, listening. Suddenly there was a faint groan from the other side of the wall. Anice gave a start.

"I don't know," she said. "Maybe you better."

"Better?"

"Go in there. Or get the owner to."

I didn't say anything for a minute. Then I said, "It's probably just some drunk guy."

"I don't know," Anice said.

"I don't want to wake the owner again. He'd probably think we were nuts for imagining things."

We both shut up then, to listen again. There were no more noises, although we strained our ears for about five minutes. Neither of us had gotten out of bed. Finally I said, "He must be sleeping it off now. Don't you suppose?"

Anice hesitated, leaning on her elbow. "Do you think so?" she said. Then she lay down. "I suppose," she said.

I lay down, too. I thought: "How do we know? The poor guy may be dead, for all we know." But we didn't say any more. And after a while, I fell asleep.

The next morning we slept later than we had intended to, but we were still up at a little after nine o'clock. It was a fine, sunny day. I watched the purple mountains through the small bathroom window while I shaved, and I felt very good as I opened the door of the cabin. I was going to ask the motel proprietor for a likely place to



stop for breakfast and try to find something nice to say to him about the Fin Do Mundo. But I never got a chance to do it.

He was dead. He was lying on a stretcher, under a sheet, right across the sidewalk. One ambulance attendant was backing up the ambulance and the other attendant was standing beside the stretcher, talking with the doctor and with the maid who had found the proprietor. The maid was still wringing her hands.

The doctor said he had had a coronary thrombosis. The maid began to tell me how she had found him when she went looking for him at eight o'clock. She said that lately, since his wife had died, he didn't like to be bothered with people coming in at all-hours off the road, so he would often sleep in one of the empty cabins. The maid was supposed to wake him in the mornings because he always slept through his alarm. When she didn't find him in his quarters behind the office, she went down the row of cabins, opening the doors of those that didn't have cars parked in front of them. "He was in this one," she said. Her eyes filled with tears; she began to wring her hands again. "Next door to you," she said. But she didn't have to tell me that.

Anice was right behind me when I asked the doctor, "If you'd been able to get to him when he had the attack, could you have saved him?" She heard the doctor say, "I don't know. Maybe."

She turned around, then, and went back into the cabin. I followed her, and we threw the hamper and our overnight things into the back seat of the car, and gunned it out to the highway just before the ambulance took off in the opposite direction. We drove along for about ten miles without saying anything, until I reached out and touched Anice's knee with my hand. But she moved away and said, "Don't." I hadn't wanted to touch her anyway; it was only that she looked so forlorn.

She was still huddled up in the corner of the car, staring out of the window, when she said a while later, "If it had been me dying, you would have done about the same."

I couldn't let her get away with that. I said, "Listen, you weren't so anxious to rush out and be helpful yourself, last night."

"That oughtn't to have had anything to do with what you did," she said. "Maybe you're right about me, only I don't see what that had to do with you." She closed her eyes. "If you'd gone over there last night, he might still be alive."

"Listen," I said, "listen, since when did you become so tenderly concerned about people—let alone some poor old guy you didn't even know?"

She opened her eyes and looked at me. "Why, how would you know—what would you care?" Her face got very red. "You don't care a damn about anything in the world, except your painting." She laughed. "That's why you can't paint."

"That's an interesting theory," I said. "And I'm awfully interested to know how you feel about it. How come you didn't tell me before we started on this trip?" She didn't answer me; and I got very mad. I said, "I guess you figured I'd do a while longer until you find another Donovan." I slowed the car down. "Well, you look around in the East," I said. "Maybe you'll find one there."

She was crying by now, but she gave a sort of laugh. "Don't worry," she said, "I won't."

I didn't like to see her cry like that, but there wasn't anything I could do about it—we both knew we'd had it now. So I just said, "Have it your way." Then I gunned up the Nash.

I drove her as far as Wendover where she got on a plane headed East. After that, I turned the car around and headed back for San Francisco. I drove all the way without stopping overnight, although it is true that when I got back here I wasn't sure any more what my hurry had been.

So here I am, still in S.F. Anice, I hear, is still in New York and I hope she stays there, or at least that if she comes back to the Coast she will forget to look me up. Some day, of course, I still intend to go East, myself. But I don't know exactly when that will be. I am occupied here; and, besides, it's an awful long ways off.

# THE CONTEMPORARY INDIAN THEATER

*by Ediriweera R. Sarathchandra*

A VISITOR in India might easily receive the impression that the Indian theater is practically dead. He will not see playhouses anywhere, although he will notice a great many cinema houses with people standing before them in long queues. He may look for some information about theatrical activity in the advertisements of newspapers or on notices posted along the streets, but he will soon realize that these refer only to films. He may even be bluntly told that the theater is a thing of the past and that the cinema is its modern and improved form.

Theatrical activity does in fact go on in India, but it is very hard to find, for it is known only to those who are vitally interested in it. It receives relatively little publicity, and the performances are not always given in places that are well known or easily accessible to the stranger. And it is undeniable that there has been a great decline in the Indian theater during the last quarter-century. Until the 1930's, for example, there were about ten theaters in Bombay and today there is only one—the

Prince's Theatre—which is set apart exclusively for the performance of plays. There are, on the other hand, seventy-five or more cinema houses in Bombay.

The situation is much the same in most other Indian cities. There is a steady process of the swallowing up of the theater by the cinema. As a result, far too much of what is left of the Indian theater today is almost entirely in the hands of amateur organizations that spring up sporadically for the performance of a particular play and cease to exist thereafter.

It is only in Bengal that an unbroken tradition of theater can still be said to exist. In Calcutta there are three theaters where, at least on certain days of the week, one can see a play. The Star and the Rang Mahal always have packed houses, while the Sri Rangam has a clientele which still enjoys seeing Sisir Bhaduri acting in plays that have long since become classics on the Bengali stage. Indeed the Bengalis seem to be far more theater-minded than any people in the rest of India, and they are more



exacting in their artistic demands. In past times, the Bengalis absorbed Western influences and wove them into the texture of the ancient Indian culture. The result is that they created a culture to which the modern mind could respond, incorporating what is best in the ancient culture with what is necessary to make that culture live in the context of present-day life. The drama was one of those new creations which sprang up from the impact of Western civilization upon the native heritage. While being modern it had, in the lyric drama of Tagore, for example, a quality that was peculiarly Indian and had a strong appeal to the temperament of the people. This is perhaps one of the reasons why the Bengalis refused to relinquish their dramatic heritage for the lure of the cheap commercial venture that the film in India, generally speaking, has thus far been. In fact, one of the most remarkable phenomena in the artistic world of India today is the manner in which the film in Bengal has steadily withstood the pernicious influence of the Hindi and Tamil film, and has resisted the temptation to popularize itself for the sake of box office receipts.

Of the plays that were current on the professional Bengali stage last summer, *Shyamali* at the Star was completing a run of four hundred performances, having been on the boards for three years, and *Ulka* at the Rang Mahal was nearing its two-hundredth performance with every indication that it would equal the record set by *Shyamali*. The most

popular film of the year, *Rani Rashmoni*, ran for fifty-odd weeks showing simultaneously at two cinemas, which means that at least half of the number of people who saw this film also went to see *Shyamali*. It can be safely inferred that the number of people who see a play like *Shyamali* at least equals the number of people who see an average film.

Nevertheless, even in Calcutta itself there has been a marked decline in theatrical activity during the past thirty-odd years. Considering that the modern Bengali drama has had a glorious history of well over a hundred years, equaled in age only by the Marathi drama, the survival of just three theaters playing on three days of the week indicates that the Bengalis have been putting up a fight against forces that are becoming too strong even for them.

The prominent personalities of the theater in most of the language groups unanimously reject the easy view that the development of the cinema has been the *sole* cause for this decline. Sisir Bhaduri, the veteran actor who has dominated the Bengali stage for the last thirty years, believes that there has been a deterioration in the quality of the drama, and he attributes this, vaguely, to "a decline in the general standards of education and culture." What he means is that people are less and less able to appreciate the serious drama that "depicts life," the "drama of ideas" of Ibsen and Shakespeare (the examples are his). "Look at the plays that are popular today," he says. "Do they

reflect life in any way? They are merely sensational."

Sisir Bhaduri was referring to *Ulka* and *Shyamali*. Both are certainly melodramas. *Ulka* is a play about a man to whom an ugly son is born. He asks his doctor friend to put an end to the child's life at birth, but the doctor, unable to do this, hands the child over to the care of a holy man living in an ashrama. The child grows up and inquires about his parents, discovers who they are, and goes to their house. The drama centers around the attempt of the parents and the handsome son and daughter they have besides their ugly child to reconcile themselves to the new situation. Into this is woven a plot in which the handsome and, of course, worthless son gets involved in a night club swindle, and is saved from death by the timely interference of the ugly son who is mortally wounded in the ensuing fracas. The play ends with the parents weeping over their dying son.

Although *Shyamali* deserves less to be called melodramatic or "sensational," it still deals with a situation that is remote from every-day life and somehow does not seem to touch the core of a genuine experience. *Shyamali* is the elder of two sisters, but she is deaf and dumb and slow-witted, while her sister is both accomplished and fair. The parents ignore *Shyamali* and want to arrange a marriage for the younger daughter but, according to traditional practice, the younger daughter cannot be married before the elder. They decide to try

a ruse, therefore, and when the bridegroom comes, they make him go through a sham ceremony with *Shyamali*, and later prepare to marry him to the younger girl whom he will actually carry away with him as his wife. But the young man, after having gone through the marriage ceremony with *Shyamali*, refuses to go through the ceremony with the younger girl. He protests that, although the ceremony was intended to be a sham, he has already made his vow to marry the elder girl and will on no account break it. The young man is thus saddled with a deaf-and-dumb wife who does not even understand what has been taking place. His parents advise him to give her up, but he refuses to do so. However, on their persuasion, he leaves his wife with her parents and does not bring her to his own home. He is torn between duty to his wife and love for his parents. As time goes on, *Shyamali* begins to understand what has taken place, and gradually there awakens in her heart a feeling of love and devotion toward the husband who has been so loyal to her. There is much conflict between the parents and their son, and the parents want him to give up his dumb wife and marry another woman, but in the course of time they realize that *Shyamali* is truly devoted to their son and that she has great qualities, and so they finally consent to her occupying her rightful place as his wife.

Perhaps neither *Shyamali* nor *Ulka* has as much literary value as some of the plays in which Sisir Bha-

duri takes the title role at the Sri Rangam. But they have succeeded in keeping the theater alive while the walls of Sri Rangam are crumbling down and the seats are getting bug-infested. Nevertheless, Sisir Bhaduri has struck a note of warning, and if the Bengali theater does not continue to provide the substantial fare it did in the past, it will soon lose the support of the educated middle class who have been its patrons. It is difficult for the theater in any country always to satisfy the highest literary taste, but the dramatic tradition can no more subsist on purely commercial ventures than it can on haphazard amateur productions. What Sisir Bhaduri has in mind, probably, is the view that once the theater ceases to have a serious purpose and becomes popular entertainment, it has begun to dig its own grave. Perhaps it is no longer possible for the theater to occupy the same place in the lives of the people as it did in the days before the invention of the radio, films, and television. On the other hand, in most countries today the theater survives because of the devotion and support of a few people who derive from it a satisfaction they cannot get elsewhere.

The efforts of the Indian National Theatre and the Bharatiya Sangh encourage the belief that in a few years the Indian theater will once more become an established institution. It may not have the following it had in the past, but it will certainly have the support of the intelligentsia who are

tired of the poor fare provided by the cinema. The Indian National Theatre, started in 1944 by Srimati Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Rohit Dave, Damu Jhaveri, and a few others, has worked energetically over the past ten years and prepared the ground for the revival that is taking place today. It has units in several regional languages, and at one time had a mobile stage which carried productions into the villages.

It was the Indian National Theatre that sponsored, in 1949, the formation of the Bharatiya Natya Sangh (Theatre Centre, India) which has over two hundred theater groups from all over India affiliated with it. The Sangh has been sponsoring a theater season every winter in Delhi, and this example is being followed in the various provinces by the regional groups. In the winter of 1954 the Sangh organized a National Drama Festival in Delhi. Theater groups from all over India were represented and four awards were given for the best out of the twenty-two plays that were finally selected for public performance. The Sangh is also establishing academies in various parts of India for the systematic teaching of theater arts. The Bharatiya Natya Vidyalaya was started in Bombay last June for this purpose, and a similar institution has been opened in Calcutta. There are also private theater groups and theater schools which work independently, but toward the same end. Among these, the School of Dramatic Arts of the Theatre Unit, Bombay, with E. Alkazi as its head



and with a staff of trained teachers, is making a most valuable contribution to the theater in the western part of India: good standards of production. The school does this by its introduction of Western methods and techniques of presentation and the employment of modern equipment.

The festival of 1954 provided the greatest impetus that has been given to Indian drama in recent times. It served, also, as a kind of stock-taking, showing both the strength and the weakness of Indian drama today. The fact that there were as many as seven hundred and forty entries, in fourteen regional languages, is sufficient evidence that interest in drama in India is still very much alive. The prize-winning play, *Bhau Bandaki*, by Khadilkar, a playwright belonging to the early part of this century, displayed the heights that Marathi drama is capable of when the plays are well written and when attention is concentrated on good acting and good direction rather than on mere musical virtuosity. Both Durga Khote and Nanasahib Phatak, who took the two main roles in this play, brought a standard of acting to the Marathi stage that has not been seen on it for many years.

The state supports the drama and allied arts through its Sangit Natak Akademi which was set up in Delhi a few years ago. The Akademi is not an affiliating body like the Bharatiya Natya Sangh. It acts as a patron, giving recognition to artists in the shape of honors and awards, giving grants for research work, and assisting thea-

ter organizations to purchase equipment or to carry out various projects designed to stimulate the theater movement.

The two main difficulties in the way of reviving the Indian theater are the lack of people to give technical direction and the shortage of original playwrights. On the amateur as well as the professional stage most Indian productions display very little knowledge of the use of proper lighting, appropriate costumes, settings, and even matters of correct poise, movement, and intonation of actors. The fact has to be faced that even the indigenous dramatic forms must now be presented on modern stages to city audiences, and that they must, therefore, conform to the tastes and habits of such audiences. Theatrical performances cannot, any longer, drag on for eight hours or more in any sort of haphazard fashion. The Western film has acquainted the general public with what good acting can be, and with the effects achieved by mechanical means. As a result the demand for higher standards of production has grown perceptibly in the past few years. This does not mean that the stage should try to compete with the films and merely present pageantry by the use of mechanical means, to the utter disregard of drama, as the Urdu theater did a few decades ago and as the Tamil professional theater of today is doing. Although the Tamil theater is still very popular, there is no doubt that it will meet the same

fate as the Urdu, Marathi, and Gujarati theaters, for it lacks substance. It cannot, in any case, compete with the film in mechanical perfection. Only on the Bengali stage, the new Gujarati stage (the productions of the Indian National Theatre, for example), and the Parsee Gujarati stage does one notice an awareness of the need for raising standards of production. In this respect the Kan-nada stage, the Telegu and the Marathi stage are all far behind. This shortcoming, however, can be remedied by the various schools of dramatic arts.

But what is lamented in all parts of India, and is hard to fulfill by any set program of work, is the need for playwrights. It is true today of practically every language group in India that there are no new playwrights who are able to bring anything worth while to the theater. Even the good productions like those of Prithviraj reveal plays of poor quality. The more popular stage hits have been, for some time, adaptations of English or European plays. Contemporary playwrights are contributing something of value in the one-act play form. This is a favorite form with Gujarati writers in particular. But although the one-act play may enrich the literature, it can hardly help in a serious theater movement. It will take a long time before audiences get used to the new theater-going habits demanded by the one-act play, and longer before they become sufficiently conscious of drama in the Western sense to appreciate this form.

The greatest impediment to creative writing in India seems to be the lack of a continuous dramatic tradition from which writers can draw their inspiration and can create something new. The tradition of classical drama died out even before the British came to India, the last known playwright being Bhavabhuti who lived in the twelfth century. What remains today are the folk legends which contain some of the elements of the classical tradition but always in a very loose and unorganized form. The style is too crude to attract the attention of the intelligentsia or to entertain the more sophisticated people of the cities, so most writers have turned their backs on it and have imitated Western writers. What has become popular is a kind of entertainment that is neither Western nor Indian and hardly deserves to be called drama. The unadulterated Western-type play has only appealed primarily to the middle and upper classes who have had an English education.

The problem, therefore, is not merely one of reviving drama. A kind of drama must be created that is more strongly rooted in the aesthetic habits of the people. Fortunately, critics and scholars have become more and more aware of this and are expressing their views in no uncertain terms. "Adib" (Mr. Shyam Lal) who regularly contributes a penetrating analysis of cultural events to the *Times of India*, Bombay, recently declared: "A few amateur groups, however ardent their passion for the stage, do not add up

to a national theatre. A few odd foreign plays put up for small audiences cannot quicken the national pulse and cannot hope to produce that ferment in the national mind which only a theatre that is alive in every part can do. A national theatre must have a national drama. . . . Nothing can avail unless we first learn to speak in our own language."

There is truth in the view expressed by Dr. V. Raghavan, one of India's greatest authorities on the classical and the folk drama, that the best way to discover or rediscover the genuine dramatic tradition of India would be to revive the Sanskrit drama and the folk plays. In his article on *Yaksha Gana*, the folk play of South Kannada, he says: "Dramatic renaissance in India today will not be truly Indian if it is only going to create an imitation in India of European theatre; an organic and truly Indian theatre has to be raised, and in this task, the theoretical Sanskrit literature on *Natya*, dance and drama, the example of Sanskrit dramatists like Kalidasa and Sudraka, and the many vernacular survivals in the various provinces in the shape of dances and dance-dramas, have got to play a part." Although Sanskrit plays have been revived from time to time in various parts of India, both in the original language and in translation, no serious attempts have been made, so far, to present them in the authentic style of the classical theater. More often than not, the translations that have been performed on the popular stage have been mutilations of the originals,

with songs substituted for the poetry.

Folk plays, with their crudities and their broad village humor, cannot be transplanted bodily onto the modern stage, but something could be created on the basis of the conventions that they employ. Certain theater groups in Bengal have been trying to use the *Yatra* in this way, but the most successful attempt in recent times is the play *Mena Gurjari*, which was produced by the Nat Mandal of Ahmedabad. Its form is derived from that of the *Bhavai*, the folk play of Gujarat, although *Mena Gurjari* is not merely a *Bhavai*. It takes the elements of the *Bhavai* and attempts to convert them into a theatrical form that would be acceptable to intelligent audiences of the present day. The result is a play of great charm in which song, dance, and rhythmic dialogue, drawn from the beautiful heritage of Gujarat, blend into a harmonious whole. The *Nayaka* or Narrator of the original *Bhavai* is most skillfully woven into this production.

Opinion on the merits of *Mena Gurjari* is widely divided among the Gujarati intelligentsia. Some express the view that the play has put the clock back and made the task of future playwrights more difficult than it was before, while "Adib" hails it as carrying the "promise of a new operatic form." Others criticize it on the ground that it is mere song and dance or ballet, and that, in view of its popularity, the chances of educating the public to appreciate real drama might be diminished. The answer to this is that the traditional



drama of India, like the drama of the entire Orient, is so closely connected with the dance and music that we cannot separate these elements and look for something called "drama" over and above them. Sanskrit plays were performed in stylized pantomime and dialogue, with occasional music, very much like the Chinese play or the Kabuki of Japan, and the folk plays of India (although not organized into an integrated whole as in the Sanskrit play) consist of song, dance, and dialogue.

These plays do not have drama in the Western sense at all. The aim of

such plays is to move people to fear and pity, happiness and sorrow (the *rasas*), by representing human action through the medium of poetry, dance, and song. Perhaps we are thinking of a purely Western definition of drama when we say that a play like *Mena Gurjari* is mere ballet. In this particular play, the song, dance, and music might not be well blended together so as to suit the action. But to criticize its *form* would be to ignore the important fact that the Orient has a definition of drama that is different from that of the West but is not less valid on that account.

# A RED FLAG COMES DOWN

*by Russell F. Wulff*

NOT long ago, several strangers came to the small village of Ghit, in the Himalayan mountains of Bengal, inquired about the wooden buildings facing the bazaar, and then departed as they had arrived, quietly and inconspicuously. Soon thereafter, a sign appeared on the wall of one of the bazaar shacks, reading: THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA. Above the building, atop a tall bamboo pole, was the brazen symbol of Communist conquest: the red flag with white hammer and sickle.

The Communists had come to the village of Ghit by plan and for purpose. They knew the importance of India's massive population, its villagers, as a decisive factor in the political destiny of India. The Communists would control the villagers, particularly in this strategic, border area of Bengal, only a few miles from Tibet.

These strangers to Ghit knew their task, and they approached it patiently and carefully. Their first bid for control would be on a bazaar day, when all the villagers gathered.

The Communists knew what to expect: The Nepalese and Lepcha peasants from the surrounding area would leave their small huts of mud and bamboo even before sunrise and without taking food. Climbing the steep Himalayan hills, along paths that wind through terraced paddy fields and forest, they would carry on their backs baskets of fruit, grain, or vegetables for sale or barter in the bazaar at Ghit. Arriving at sunup, the peasants would spread their goods on the ground, ready for sale. The market place would become crowded and involved in its bargaining.

The Communists knew also that the villagers would be too occupied in their own affairs to notice the Communist sign or the red flag flying over them. They had calculated this factor. They would wait until the late morning hours when bargaining became slack and the villagers more sociable. This was the appropriate time to make their bid.

From a platform in the midst of the crowd, the Communist spokesman called for the attention of the villagers, the first step toward political control—the technique of fostering the cause of the people with false promises, of causing discontent and casting aspersions on all who oppose the Communists. They know that slander and lies, when repeated constantly, will eventually cloud reason and become accepted fact.

On this morning, the spokesman told the villagers that the Communist party had come to help them. The party, it was explained, would give two hundred rupees (about forty dollars) to each villager who would sign his name to a list in the Communist office and pay four annas (about five cents). Only by supporting the Communist party at the approaching election, it was explained, could the villagers rid themselves of their corrupt elements: the moneylender, the constable, and the priest, whose mission and dispensary were in Ghit. The moneylender, it was said, had exploited the poor, while the constable had taken bribes. The priest was denounced as a black marketeer, imperialist, and exploiter.

These accusations excited and bewildered the villagers. As the incident was retold, its account became more embellished. Naturally, word got to the priest, for everyone who visited his mission carried some version of the incident to him.

For the moment, the priest was satisfied to listen: he was a patient man. A Swiss by birth, in his forties, he was a man of considerable physical vigor and of towering character. He was of the St. Augustine Order, a Swiss mission originally intended for Tibet but established in the Himalayas of India by circumstances. His fifteen years in India have been enjoyable ones, building his church, school, and dispensary, and extending his helping hand to the peasant families of his mountain parish. His appearance was hardly that of a priest: tennis shoes, khaki socks and breeches, and heavily knit sweater. Only on occasions and at religious services did he wear a black cassock, awkwardly twisted over his stocky frame. When hunting pheasant in the forest, without his cassock but wearing his hunting hat of green felt with feather, and carrying an ancient shotgun, he looked more like a full-bearded Bavarian sportsman.



After hearing the varied accounts of the Communist's day in the bazaar, the priest decided to hear this slander for himself. On the next bazaar day, when the Communist spoke, the priest listened from the fringe of the crowd. Again, it was said that the priest was a "black marketeer, imperialist, and exploiter."

As he listened, he thought of his years in the area. Aside from his religious work, he had advised the villagers on many of their problems, helped them on their lands and with their crops, distributed food and clothing, formed co-operatives, educated their young, offered medical care to persons of all religious faiths.

Yet, he was realistic: he knew that he could lose favor with his villagers—in spite of his deeds—if he did not defend himself and his deeds against Communist attack. If the Communists were allowed to persist in their lies, they would find believers. He knew that deeds do not always speak for themselves. He must fight also with the word for the mind and sentiments of his villagers.

In the days that followed, the priest announced to the villagers that on the next bazaar day, when the Communists came to talk, he would answer them from the same platform. However, when that day came, the Communists failed to appear.

A week passed to the next bazaar day, but this time the Communists came—with a handful of hooligans from Kalimpong, the near-by center of international intrigue for this border area of Bengal. The priest was there, also, waiting for them. Naturally, the market place was unusually crowded, for all the villagers had come to witness the historic meeting of the priest and Communists.

The Communist leader went directly to the platform in the bazaar, waited for the crowd to settle, then offered his categorical denunciations. Especially, as before, did he accuse the priest of being a black marketeer, imperialist, and exploiter. Finally, the Communist gave way to the priest.

As soon as the priest started to speak, the ruffians from Kalimpong began to catcall and interrupt. He waited for them to finish.

"Why should this be?" he asked. "Didn't we listen to the Communist speak? Are these Communists afraid to hear my words?"

The villagers demanded that the men keep quiet.

"It is said that I am a black marketeer," the priest said, "but tell me if there are any here who were charged for the powdered milk or medicine I distributed."

All the people were still.

"It is said that I am an exploiter of the people," he continued, "but let me ask you three questions: Who built your school here? Who built your dispensary here? Who built your church here?"

The people of the village smiled to themselves. They knew that these things had been provided by him.

"It is the Communist who exploits you!" the priest said, explaining how the Communists had taken four annas from each villager who signed his name to a list, on the pretense that the Communist party would give two hundred rupees to each villager who signed. What the Communists had done was to submit the list of villagers' signatures as an official petition under the government's cattle-purchase loan program. The villagers could have obtained the loan without the Communists and without paying four annas to the Communist party.

"It is also said that I am an imperialist," the priest continued, "but is it not so that I am a citizen of India?" He had become an Indian citizen at the time of Independence, when the government offered him the opportunity.

The priest indicated the flag with hammer and sickle. "Do you know whose flag that is?"

There was a hesitancy among the villagers.

"It belongs to a foreign country—to Russia! What right do these people have in flying a foreign flag in this village! Are these people ashamed to fly the flag of India?"

There was no response from the crowd.

"I'll tell you why!" the priest went on. "These people believe in this foreign flag. They believe in its color! And what does the red color mean? It means blood!"

The priest explained how the Russian Communists, and the Chinese as well, had won power through revolutions of blood. "Why should this flag be allowed to fly in our bazaar?"

Then he made his bid: "How many of you are in favor of taking down the flag? Raise your hand!"

The Communist leader jumped upon the platform and demanded of the people to raise their hands if they wanted the flag to remain.

Confusion swept the bazaar.

The Communist leader began shouting that they had won the show of hands: that it was the villagers' wish that the flag remain.

The priest waited until there was less excitement before speaking again. Then he asked for the villagers once again to show their hands, this time as the Communist had asked: "All those who want the flag to remain, raise your hand!"

Only a few hands went up.

Then the priest appointed a village committee to lower the flag. The villagers rallied around the priest; together they went to the village office of the Communist Party and lowered the flag.

A short time thereafter, when the day of election came, the villagers—joined by the priest—cast their ballots in defeat of the Communist party candidate.

The priest is still the target of Communist propaganda, but the villagers now know the truth: they know the priest is their friend.

In defending himself against Communist accusations, the priest asked in effect to be measured by his actual performance and motives. By reviewing these deeds to his villagers, he brought to them a realization that his were not mere words but sincere acts in their behalf. The result was confidence in the priest. He had created a sympathetic bond between himself and his villagers, which will now be difficult for the Communists to breach.

This incident involving the priest and the Communist has much meaning to those who would unveil and vanquish Communist subversion and intrigue in India. Defense of freedom and democracy in India is a task for government and individuals alike, wherever there is Communist activity, even at the most grass-roots level—the village. Communism in the village cannot be choked out from above: it must be met squarely in the village itself, with positive words and deeds.



# THE OTHER FRANCE— THE RIGHTIST TRADITION

by Thomas Molnar

PIERRE POUJADE'S appearance in French political life has filled with alarm the nation's friends and, on the other hand, has strengthened the arguments of those who consider France the weakest link in the Atlantic alliance. While only a few observers seem to be disturbed by certain unmistakable signs of the resurgence of ultranationalistic tendencies in Germany, such as the Stahlhelm, the presence of fifty, rather uncouth and mentally goose-stepping members of the *petit bourgeois* among the deputies of the National Assembly shocks public opinion everywhere. Thus it seems that in spite of the four-year Vichy interlude, and the solid block of Communist votes since the Liberation, the civilized world is unwilling to associate the name of France with political extremism, or, at least, it accepts Herbert Luethy's statement that "a policy of moderation in France has always been the result not of moderate decisions but of the clash of extremes."

It is widely held that political radicalism in France is essentially a Leftist phenomenon, the very term "revolution" being part of the *mythe de la gauche* ever since 1789. This, however, is an erroneous view. It ignores the tradition, the philosophical bases, and the religious undercurrent of a Rightist radicalism, coeval with the Leftist "myth," and opposing it on every conceivable occasion in the course of France's contemporary history.

The uneasy truce, concluded at the birth of the Third Republic in 1875, was considered by Edouard Drumont, the anti-Semite journalist, and his followers as a soulless contract, entered upon by businessmen and cunning politicians for whom the sacred land of the patrie was but a huge stock market and a political arena. Drumont's attack on the Republic had taken place years before the Dreyfus

case, and it was directed against those who were thriving on the lay regime and its agnostic philosophy. The spokesmen of the monarchist, etc., tradition were looking with alarm at the industrial revolution which established in France the rule of the financier, the banker, and the big industrialist. In England the aristocracy did not consider it below their dignity to enter upon careers in industry, or to associate themselves with the emerging big entrepreneurs; in France the traditional ruling classes, after their return with the Bourbons, and reassured by their victories in 1830 and 1851, meant to continue living off their large estates as absentee landlords in the glittering capital.

In several of his novels Zola furnishes excellent and acute observations about the way the scions of France's greatest families threw away their fortune, dignity, and life. While a wholesale destruction of old names and estates was going on, astute investors and capitalists (some of them with German, Spanish, and Jewish names) created and took over many leading positions in industry and banking. To the superficial or ill-intentioned observer this situation could appear as a liquidation of the old, peasant and aristocratic France by busy moneymakers with unpronounceable, barbaric names. It was a matter of opinion whether to see in this development a sign of progress, a crisis for which the whole nation was responsible, or the conspiracy of a malevolent clique, bent upon "erasing France from the map."

The journalist and pamphleteer Edouard Drumont took the latter view. Of a family of peasants and civil servants, Drumont shared Zola's feelings concerning industrial and financial capitalism which was infiltrating the nation's life. He wanted to halt the destruction of old values, slow down the process of transition, thus saving the proletariat in whom he saw not members of the International of workers, but uprooted French peasants. How much of his thought was constructive, how much aimed simply at keeping anti-Semitism alive is difficult to tell today. At any rate, Drumont rebelled against the robot mentality he saw coming and, in despair, tried to hold on indiscriminately to anything that in his tortured imagination seemed to further his cause. The true danger for France—Drumont

preached—was the Jewish conquest. But the Jews, he said, merely exploited the situation into which France had put herself. They threw themselves on a society whose framework was broken, and whose resources the war of 1870 and the reparations had diminished. “They organized their conquest patiently, with the flair and prejudices of modern man, and with his immense but silly hopes.”

It is obvious that Drumont saw in the Jews the representatives of the “modern man,” the bourgeois. He hated the latter’s machines, greed, and mentality, and called his idea of ownership “impious, egotistical, without any concept of duty.” Thus capitalism, machine industry, and “Jewish finance” were combined in one denunciation and charged with “emptying France of her political, religious and family traditions as the embalmers pump the brain out through the nostrils.”

As political propaganda, these are effective words, but without revolutionary significance. If the Dreyfus scandal had not arrived providentially for his cause and career, Drumont would have remained an obscure man, vituperating against all and sundry, but hardly listened to. The Dreyfus case provided him with a daily paper, *La Libre Parole* and, for eight years, with an influence in military, clerical, and monarchist circles far out of proportion to the meager positive program he is known to have had. Georges Bernanos, who followed him in his youth, writes that Drumont’s philosophy led in straight line to the restoration of the king. But his disciples went further: “The current of Maurras’ ideas,” writes Bernanos elsewhere, “following its course through the deep layers of conservative bourgeoisie, finally took a turn toward dictatorship.” In their revulsion at a materialistic philosophy, paving the way for a complacent democracy and utilitarian morals, Drumont and his friends, once compelled to drop the sword, had not much to offer to their countrymen besides a swashbuckling candidate for dictatorship, General Boulanger.

Drumont’s adventure demonstrated at least one thing: the nation as a whole was unwilling to give up the social and economic conquests of democracy for no matter how lofty a dream about a medi-



eval, "chivalrous and peasant" France. But in the subsequent decades, nothing—epoch-making events or national catastrophes—could dislodge from the mind of the intellectual Right the conviction that they had been victims of a colossal conspiracy, and that *le pays réel* was suffering from the callousness of bourgeois domination. The picture of the replete financier became a bitter Rightist caricature before the first serious clashes of the middle class and the organized workers; but the attack on the power of money was never separated from the attack on democracy itself, which was described as incompetent (Emile Faguet), encouraging materialism and mediocrity, and compromising with vulgar taste.

As a consequence of their defeat, the Right-wing groups were reduced to political impotence. After the rehabilitation of Dreyfus, the Republic passed in quick succession a number of laws affecting the Church, the State, the army, and the schools, and aimed at the complete secularization of the public philosophy and the official life of the nation. Within the republican framework, the liberal, radical, and socialist pattern of thought took hold of people's mentality, and channeled their political actions in one of these three main directions. Under these circumstances, the alternative before the spiritual descendants of Drumont was either to remain associated with Maurras and his *Action Française*, or to seek political expression in the successful parties in the Center or on the Left. Many among those who had chosen the first solution subsequently detached themselves from Maurras when he was excommunicated, and his movement and newspaper forbidden for Catholics. On the other hand, we have remarked the strong aversion that Drumont and his collaborators felt for the bourgeoisie whose greed and materialism they never ceased denouncing. With a seeming paradox, then, many young men, especially after World War I, which consolidated the position and heightened the prestige of the Republic, enrolled in the Socialist party. Here, at least, they found a systematically antibourgeois ideology.

Men like Marcel Déat, Laval, Doriot (just as Henri de Man in Belgium and Mussolini in Italy) became socialists, as Charles Péguy before them, hoping that the movement, as it matured, would shed

its Marxist armor and join with the healthy elements, peasant, bourgeois, and aristocratic, of France in overthrowing the lay Republic and abolishing the hated parliamentary system. But the Socialists disappointed them. In the first place, Jaurès' moderating and patriotic influence was no longer felt in the party, and the recent victory of communism in Russia increased the Socialists' confidence in the correctness of their ideology. As a matter of fact, the majority of the party simply seceded and joined the Communist International (1921). They took with them the party organ, *L'Humanité*, founded by Jaurès and Briand.

This split was promptly followed by that of the Socialist party's Right wing which had gathered around Déat. The thirty deputies who left with him claimed that socialism, truncated of its Communist wing now under Soviet sponsorship, would, at best, be a weak voice in the Leftist chorus, and that only a reappraised, *moral* Marxism would be able to compete with the Communists for the votes of the workers *and* of the redeemable sections of the middle class. It was evident that the latter would never accommodate itself to an ossified Marxist doctrine, its fatalistic concept of history and of class morality.

As Déat's group had retained their generally antibourgeois sentiments and convictions, the logical choice for them was the extreme Right although no appreciable number of the working class ever followed them. Here, of course, a different lesson had to be learned; the Right was far from jubilant—on the contrary, furious but impotent before a victorious Republic. Here not only the bourgeoisie was subjected to scornful attacks, but the whole democratic system with its elections and fanfare, scientific credo, and drifting city mob. Here Maurras, though unable to attract the masses, ruled supreme over the minds, here Léon Daudet vituperated against the Revolution and Napoleon ("the two bloody idols"), and against the entire "stupid nineteenth century."

In Maurras' retinue, gathered around the *Action Française*, there were some brilliant young writers and intellectuals, Bernanos, Céline, Thierry Maulnier, Drieu La Rochelle, etc. The success of Maurras must be explained, at least in part, by the frustration that

these young men felt over their political impotence, inherited from their fathers, the losers of the Dreyfus case. By the 1930's this frustration became an obsession, and particularly in talented and sensitive writers it was expressed by cynical exasperation or, not rarely, by apocalyptic visions. The feeling of political impotence finally liberated in them a fervor to destroy the existing frame of society and its shallow morality. Drieu, whom the critic Etiemble calls "*un négatif de Malraux*," exclaimed: "I am a fascist because I have measured the progress of decadence in Europe." No wonder he and his friends soon began hailing Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco as saviors of the Continent.

Theirs was the generation of Malraux; some of them were a little older. Yet, what different witnesses *they* are of the tragic years between the two wars! For they fought on the other side of the barricade in February 1934, hailed Hitler against Blum, flocked to Franco's army instead of the International Brigade, and could hardly conceal their joy at the French surrender in June 1940 in which they saw the just punishment of a servile and corrupt regime. The Stalin-Hitler pact itself, which created a wave of moral collapse among fellow travelers and split the French Communist party, provoked in the camp of Maurras, Déat, Doriot, and de la Rocque elation and confident expectation. What honest Communists like Paul Nizan could not accept from Stalin, Hitler's French admirers received as a new guarantee of the Fuehrer's brilliant Machiavellism.

Hitler and his Germans represented the "new barbarians" that a Drieu was eager to welcome, for they were supposed to bring with them a clean and healthy vigor, shaking life into "modern man whose highest ambition and achievement was the sexual act." More than that, fascism was to restore the rule of the elite over "the dispirited masses that have remained without spiritual guidance and moral authority." This was an echo of Sorel's teaching, rejecting the illusion of progress, and expecting a new (proletarian) elite to impose new molds on society.

These new molds, the Vichy regime, the *Révolution Nationale*,



and Marshal Pétain were to manufacture. Pétain himself, the adulated hero who was to save France in 1940 as he had saved her at Verdun, knew next to nothing about politics, and obtained what knowledge he had from Maurras and his disciple, the ex-Socialist Alibert. As a soldier used to command, he instinctively hated the parliamentary system and distrusted the politicians of the Third Republic, including Laval himself. This made him ideally eligible for the role of a Franco, although his entourage persuaded him that he was rather a second Saint Louis or a Jeanne d'Arc. Accordingly, from February 1934 on, a secret brain trust began gathering around his prestigious figure, hoping, incidentally, that in the new France that Pétain might some day lead, their personal grievances would also receive a long overdue consideration. Indeed, almost all the public figures of the Vichy regime from 1940 to 1945—ministers, secretaries of state, military chiefs, official negotiators with the Germans, and secret messengers to the Allies—were men of talent but also of inordinate ambitions and authoritarian temper who had been unable to find a place for themselves in the labyrinth of Byzantine intrigues of the declining Republic. Although, as mentioned above, quite a few had been Socialists at the beginning of their careers, they had gone a long way since the early 'twenties in the opposite direction, and were unacceptable in any but inferior capacity to the Popular Front governments. Hence their intense hatred of Leftist politicians, and their greedy haste to identify those who ruined their personal careers, with the very "gravediggers" of the *patrie*.

But not all who were swarming around Pétain in the early period of Vichy were opportunists. The first task was, of course, as Laval pointed out, "to destroy the fetichism of democracy which had delivered the nation to the worst excesses of capitalism." This, the occupying power achieved at one stroke. But now Frenchmen were needed, men of dedication, to accomplish the National Revolution which was to be a reply to 1789. Perhaps the Marshal, and certainly Pierre Laval, despised the many ideologists who now avidly presented the social and political panacea concocted by them during the long years of inner exile. But time was pressing, Hitler's New Order would not wait; with an incredible naïveté, the principles of

the National Revolution were counted upon to serve as the groundwork for a new *European* constitution.

Its tenets were vague, as are the works of excessively abstract minds, untried in the complexities of human affairs. Marshal Pétain, who adhered to the National Revolution in proportion as real power was slipping out of his hands, defined it thus: "National in foreign policy, based on the principle of hierarchy in domestic matters, co-ordinating and controlling the country's economy, and, above all, penetrated by a social spirit." This was, by and large, the Déat-Alibert line before their split with the Socialists, but in the intervening twenty years many honest intellectuals, like the historian Bainville and Mounier, the philosopher of Personalism, had also contributed to make it more respectable.

It has been said about France that she refuses to accept the harsh realities of our age, and the demands they make on nations and individuals. This reluctance to be "modern" is usually laid at the doorstep of Leftist-utopian dreamers whose revolutionary obsession and dogmatic rigidity are said to be matched only by their ignorance of economics. The ideas of the Right, however, concerning revolution, politics, and the organization of society also went against the grain of the Western concept of an industrial democracy. The Right too rejected the alternative between capitalism and collectivism, as "neither satisfies the basic demands of human nature" (Robert Aron). It too denounced the parliamentary system as senile and unable to cope with problems arising from the new modes of production; it preconized, instead, a corporatist state with a large degree of autonomy for regions and professions. It too rejected excessive individualism and the ethical neutrality that the republican-bourgeois school system inculcated in the minds of the young. Attacking the rigidly centralized system of administration, which, in France, is erroneously believed to be the work of the Great Revolution, Mounier had suggested to "liberate the individual from his triple servitude: to the state, the trusts, and the political parties"; this theoretical attempt at decentralization, however, was bound to lose out against the Vichyites' commitment to the hierarchic organization of authority.

Fiercely chauvinistic, the proponents of the National Revolution, like the Marxists, showed willingness to sacrifice the national interest to a larger, stronger body, such as a "federated Europe," with the difference that they expected Germany, not the Soviet Union, to bring it about. With shattered dreams, but still loyal to his earlier choice, Drieu La Rochelle wrote in 1943: "We had put our hopes in Hitler's socialism which was to build a European social economy and an International of nationalisms." After which, as Gilles, the hero of his prewar novel, exclaims: "In all of Europe a new life will be born, a life of dance, songs and prayers. But for this the old, abominable, mercantile civilization has to die first, die too its miserable chatter and grotesque abstractions."

The utopian tone in all this is unmistakable, and perhaps a recent writer has made the correct diagnosis when he stated that Frenchmen have a nihilistic desire to reject the twentieth century. If twentieth century means parliamentary democracy, liberal public philosophy, and capitalism sweetened with welfare-state pills, then it is evident that about 37 per cent of France's voters are indifferent to the calendar; they are willing either to embark upon some new adventure or, on the contrary, to "turn back the clock," as many critics put it. At any rate, the fact is that Pierre Poujade comes dangerously close to the type of energetic young men who, in the last years of Vichy, were known as "*les jeunes cyclistes*" on account of their ruthless determination to pedal their way to undisputed power. Poujade is not a new phenomenon in French politics. Similarly, the people whom he represents are in their attitudes and parochial horizon as old as *la douce France* herself; it will be extremely difficult, if at all possible, to persuade them to vote for a Mendès-France who represents the industrial revolution and the liquidation not only of the vanishing *gloire*, but also of a way of life.

It is said that the majority of Poujade's followers are small shopkeepers like himself, owners of small mills, small factories, working with five or six men in enterprises still organized after the anachronistic economic pattern of the medieval guilds. But even many of those whose intellectual and political sophistication would never



allow them to vote for Poujade may secretly be in sympathy with the movement. They believe that not only the smallness and personal feeling of shops and family enterprises, but also that undefinable flavor that the French countryside exudes, the leisurely rhythm of life, and the closely knit family pattern, will succumb to the rationalization of economy. Poujade's bully boys may be a far cry from this idyllic quality of France; nevertheless, we must not forget that all the extreme Rightist and fascist movements of our time have achieved their first successes as the shields of tradition and of national values. The shields themselves soon proved rotten, and will prove rotten again; but traditions, no matter how clumsily defined and defended, deserve our solicitude.

*Tyranny is a habit capable of being developed, and at last becomes a disease. . . . The man and the citizen disappear forever in the tyrant.*

—FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY

# CHINESE COMMUNIST PUBLICATION POLICY AND THOUGHT CONTROL

*by Franklin W. Houn and Yuan-li Wu*

UPON his unification of China more than two thousand years ago Ch'in-shih Huang-ti decreed that all undesirable books in the empire be burned. This official effort to impose thought control through the destruction of unorthodox books was repeated from time to time by Chinese rulers of subsequent dynasties. But none has equaled the effort made by the Communist regime since their seizure of power on the mainland in 1949.

While it is impossible to obtain an exact figure on the total number of books destroyed by the Communists during the last few years, isolated cases reported by the Communist press suggest the vast quantity of "objectionable" books that have been suppressed or done away with. For example, in 1951 the privately owned Commercial Press, the largest publishing house in China prior to 1949, was forced to convert more than 90 per cent of its stock into paper pulp. This meant that the press could retain only 1,354 out of more than 15,000 outstanding titles. The Chung-hua Book Company, the second largest publishing firm, was allowed to retain only 2,000 titles out of more than 13,000. "Pernicious" books on the shelves of bookstores or in the hands of private citizens in Shanghai suffered the same fate. During the short period of November 1-23, 1951, books destroyed in Shanghai had a total weight of more than 32 tons—a very high figure in view of the light weight of Chinese books. A Communist newspaper in Peking also reported that in 1952 books collected for destruction by the authorities in Chekiang Province were "piled up like a mountain." The same newspaper further stated that many of the books so collected and destroyed were "precious editions of valuable books having no bearing on politics whatsoever."

Book destruction is only a part of the Communist effort to exercise thought control and secure ideological conformity. While the destruction of objectionable books can help prevent the spread of politically obnoxious ideas, the consolidation of political power and the construction of a socialist society require active support from the masses. The suppression of undesirable thought, therefore, is accompanied by a program of indoctrination and training which has permeated the entire publishing field in Communist China. Not only government and party literature, but newspapers, periodicals, textbooks, reference books, works of literature, art books, and comic strips are used as instruments for educating, indoctrinating, and organizing the masses. As one Communist leader in the publishing industry has remarked in this regard: "Publications are expected to equip the broad masses with Marxist-Leninist theories and other cultural and scientific knowledge as well as to incite them to march forward."

The Chinese Communist utilization of publications as a medium of propaganda dates back to the time of the formation of their party in 1920. In the beginning, they relied primarily upon periodicals to propagandize Marxist-Leninist philosophies and to win converts to their cause. The *Hain-ching-nien* (the New Youth), the *Hsaing-tao Chou-pao* (the Weekly Guardian), and the *Hung-ch'i* (the Red Flag) were their principal magazines at that time. In the absence of any publishing facilities of their own, Marxist literature in book form which had been written or translated by Chinese Communists could get into print only with the co-operation of non-Communist publishers and government censors. Before long, however, Communists and pro-Communists were able to infiltrate some of the publishing houses in Shanghai, thus making it somewhat easier for Communist propaganda publications to be printed. Also, the Comintern helped the Chinese Communists smuggle in publications printed in Chinese by the Foreign Language Service in Moscow. Finally, in 1938, an official publishing house was established in Yenan by the Communist Party of China, and the Publication Committee and the Bureau of Publications of the Department of Propaganda of the Party Central Committee were charged with the responsibility of



formulating publication policy and supervising the publishing establishment.

After the founding of the new regime in Peking, the Communists began to work vigorously to make the nation's publishing industry an effective part of their propaganda machine. Until September 1954, an agency known as the Publications Administration was engaged in carrying out this policy on behalf of the party.

In the beginning the Publications Administration appeared to be primarily concerned with the conversion of all publishing establishments into Communist-controlled companies and it gave little or no attention to the formal organization of the publishing industry. As a result, the high degree of specialization that has characterized the structure of the newspaper, radio, and film industries under the Communist regime since its founding was not introduced in the publishing field until late in 1950. Prior to that time, for example, the state-owned Hsin-hua Book Company, which then had 887 branch offices and 30 printing plants, was not only a publisher but a printer and book distributor. The same situation existed in the privately owned publishing firms. The Publications Administration, however, soon strayed from its limited sphere of jurisdiction by assuming control over the editing, printing, and distributing of books and periodicals, in spite of the fact that, under the publication policies formulated by the Publications Administration itself, the publishing firms were responsible for these tasks. Under these circumstances, chaos and confusion prevailed in the publishing industry.

To remedy this, the Publications Administration convened the First National Conference on Publications in September 1950. At this conference a number of resolutions were adopted. It was decided that henceforth the Publications Administration was to concern itself only with matters of policy, including the supervision of the execution of such policies by the publishing firms. Furthermore, as far as possible, specialization was to be effected within the publishing industry.

When the conference referred to specialization within the publishing industry it had two distinct matters in mind. First, the publishing, printing, and distribution of books and periodicals was to

be handled by three separate groups of organizations: the publishers, the printers and the distributors. Second, each publishing company was to specialize in the publication of works in certain specific fields. These aims were obviously designed to strengthen co-ordination among the companies and to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

In pursuance of these resolutions the Hsin-hua Book Company was designated as the official agency to handle the nation-wide distribution of books. Its printing plants were reorganized into a government printing house, to be called the Hsin-hua Printing Factory. A number of official publishing houses were established to take charge of the editing and publishing of books in specific fields. For example, the People's Press became the publisher of works on political theory and political affairs; the Youth Press, of works for youths and children; the Popular Press, of works for the general reader; and the People's Educational Press, of textbooks for elementary and middle schools.

The principle of specialization also applies to privately owned publishing houses. Thus the Communist regime is able to solve two problems at once. On the one hand, privately owned publishing houses, some of which were leading book firms under the Kuomintang regime, are eliminated as competitors of the Communists' official presses. On the other hand, it can make the privately owned publishing houses virtually a part of its own publishing organization in co-ordination with its official presses. The Commercial Press and the Chung-hua Book Company are, for example, instructed to reproduce only the Chinese classics and to publish only linguistic studies.

Besides government-owned and privately owned publishing houses, there are also presses jointly owned by the government and private interests. The San-lien Book Company, which has been designated as the publisher of works in the fields of the social sciences, is the leading press of this type.

As of May 1954, there were some 80 publishing houses on the China mainland. Some were operated on a nation-wide basis and were called "publishing houses on the national level." Others were

operated only within specific localities and were referred to as "publishing houses on local levels." Local publishing houses were publishers of works having specific bearing on local politics, local economy, and local culture.

Since the promulgation by the Government Administrative Council of the "Provisional Regulations on the Control of the Book Publishing, Printing and Distributing Firms" on August 16, 1952, all publishing houses, government-owned or otherwise, are required to submit publication plans periodically to the appropriate government agencies for approval, and no publishing firm may publish anything in contradiction to the basic policies, laws, decrees, and orders of the government. Under these regulations, publishing houses become tools of the government and all approved publications are written in accordance with the policies of the regime.

The Communist policy of massive propaganda and vigorous control of the publications media is clearly reflected in the nature and quantity of the products of the publication industry. The following salient features may be noted:

In the first place, according to official Communist statistics, the number of books and periodicals printed has registered a tremendous increase under the new regime.

|           | Copies of Books<br>Printed<br>(in million copies) | Copies of Periodicals<br>Printed |
|-----------|---|----------------------------------|
| 1950..... | 274.6   | 35.3                             |
| 1951..... | 669.6   | 176.8                            |
| 1952..... | 886.0   | 180.0                            |
| 1954..... | 938.9   | 190.0                            |

The rate of increase was especially rapid during 1950-51, which for the Communist regime was the initial period of political consolidation and was marked by the onset of the Korean war, calling for a redoubling of the government's effort in political indoctrination. However, the increase continued steadily through 1954, and it was, in relative terms, more spectacular in periodical literature than in books. Compared with the corresponding figures in



1936, when 178 million copies of books and 32.2 million copies of periodicals were printed in China proper, even allowing for the omission of publications in Manchuria, then under Japanese control, the Communist effort to communicate with, and channel the thought of, the population is impressive.

The nature of the information and ideas contained in this torrent of words may be discerned by a further analysis of the types of books and periodicals published. In the case of books, the following data for 1950 and 1952 show an interesting trend.

|                                       | Comparative Analysis of the<br>Composition of Books<br>Printed<br>(number of titles) |       |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------|
|                                       | 1950   | 1952  |
| Ideology .....                        | 458  | 110   |
| Government regulations and policy     | 2,854  | 2,045 |
| Intellectual and artistic expressions | 3,629  | 2,507 |
| Education and school texts.....       | 1,517  | 1,325 |
| Subtotal .....                        | 8,458  | 5,987 |
| Natural science and technology....    | 1,856  | 2,183 |
| General .....                         | 23   | 36    |
| Non-Chinese texts .....               | 69   | 604   |
| Total .....                           | 10,406   | 8,810 |

In a broad sense, the first four groups of books are all intended to bring to the reading public a greater understanding of, and conformity with, the Communist party's doctrines, policies, and *Weltanschauung*, while the fifth group contains the raw material for molding technicians and skilled workers. Bearing in mind the large increase in the number of copies printed between 1950 and 1952, we may note in particular the decrease in the number of titles published in the same period. The decrease occurred in every group of books except those on natural science and technology and the non-Chinese publications; it was greatest in the case of books on ideology per se. The smaller number of titles published and the greater number of copies printed may be interpreted as a deliberate attempt

to communicate on a larger scale a smaller number of messages to the readers, thus suggesting even greater conformity and standardization or stereotyping and stricter control.

On the other hand, the increase in the number both of titles published and of copies printed in the field of natural science and technology indicates a conscious effort to supply the increasing needs of technical experts, students, and trainees in line with the Communist program of economic development. Apparently, scope and variety must be served in the field of science and engineering, while conformity and mass response are the objectives in the government's dealing with the conduct and mind of its subjects. It is even possible that the decrease in the number of new titles bringing ideological messages reflects the inevitable attrition of ideas in a totalitarian philosophy once the initial massive blanketing of the readership has been achieved.

The staggering scale on which certain ideological messages and government policy pronouncements have been brought to the people through books and pamphlets may be seen in a few typical examples. For instance, between 1949 and 1954, the People's Press alone was instrumental in printing 17 million copies of works by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. During the same period, the *Communist Manifesto* and the *History of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party* were reprinted 39 times. Between 1949 and 1953 the Communist press printed over 4 million copies of Hu Ch'iao-mu's *Thirty Years of the Chinese Communist Party* and almost 2.5 million copies of Liu Shao-ch'i's *On the Party*. From 1951 through the first half of 1955, more than 9 million copies of Mao Tse-tung's *Selected Works* were printed. Between 1949 and the beginning of 1955 the country was also treated with 1.5 million copies of Mao's *On the People's Democratic Dictatorship* and a million copies of *On Practice* by the same best-selling author.

Examples of the popularization of government regulations may be found in the printing during 1951 of 11.5 million copies of a popular illustrated edition of the Marriage Law and over 20 million copies of a similar edition of the law for the suppression of "counter-revolutionaries." The extremely large number of copies printed in

the case of these few titles compares significantly with the average of 14,000 copies per title printed in 1953.

The predominance of the works representing Communist orthodoxy both on the international and on the national planes reflects a singleness of purpose and a high degree of conformity which, while disturbing to contemplate, are nevertheless to be expected. Not so obvious is another aspect of Soviet influence in the reading material reaching the Chinese public. According to official Chinese statistics, the planned popularization of Soviet literature may be seen in the rising proportion of material by Soviet authors in all translated works. The ratio rose from 64.1 per cent in the period between October 1949 and the end of 1950 to 87.1 per cent in 1953. Of a total of 1,837 translated titles published in 1953, 528 were on science and technology, and the prevalence of Soviet works is undoubtedly of far-reaching significance. If this trend continues, it is not difficult to see that for the next generation at any rate, when Communist China cannot yet become self-sufficient in the supply of technical personnel and original research, a technological dependence on the Soviet Union will supplement and even surpass the dependence on Soviet material assistance which, despite the voluminous propaganda on the subject, has been on a small scale in absolute terms. Herein lies a good example of intellectual penetration *par excellence*.

Not the least significant is the fact that as far as publications are concerned, the cultural flow between the Soviet Union and Communist China is overwhelmingly a one-way stream. Of the 20 titles of foreign language books published in Communist China in 1950 only 2 were in Russian as against 14 in English and 4 in French. In 1952 the distribution of the 84 foreign language titles was: 48 in Japanese, 21 in English, 4 in French, 4 in Russian, 2 in German, and 5 in other languages.

Two inferences suggest themselves. In the first place, as far as Russian readers are concerned, the Soviet Union probably prefers to regulate the nature and flow of propaganda on China within the Soviet Union without the assistance of the Chinese. In the second place, the figures seem to indicate that, since foreign language



books published in Communist China are propaganda pure and simple, they are primarily aimed at those peoples whom Communist China wishes to influence most, namely, the Japanese and the English-speaking world. This interpretation finds further support in the growth of other non-Chinese texts published for the consumption of various racial groups in Communist China. During 1950, 48 titles were published in Mongolian and one in Uigur. Two years later, as a result of the Korean war, 230 titles were published in Korean. These were meant for consumption both in Korea and by the Korean population in China. Also in 1952, 162 titles were published in Mongolian, 85 in Uigur, 34 in the Kazak tongue, 6 in Tibetan, and 3 in other scripts. The shift of emphasis in the languages used is symptomatic of a continually changing political situation to which official propaganda must adapt itself.

Finally, as we turn to the periodical literature, apart from technical journals, the nature of the popular publications may be inferred from a list of 16 monthlies and fortnightlies each of which has a circulation of over 100,000. Seven of these—with such titles as *Current Affairs*, *Study*, *Political Study*, *The New Observer*, *World Affairs*, *The People's Pictorial*, and *The Popular Illustrated*—accounted for 3.7 million copies per issue out of an aggregate of 6.9 million copies. Two publications, *Chinese Youth* and the *High School Student*, accounted for 25 per cent of the total circulation. The remaining seven publications are addressed to such special groups as women, theatrical workers, film-goers, and so forth. Allowing for the fact that a number of the periodicals in the first two groups were fortnightlies, the predominant accent on current affairs and general political indoctrination, as well as on such important social groups as youths and women, lend further evidence to the Communist policy of propaganda and indoctrination.

The perennial question will be raised as to the effectiveness of all this propaganda and information which the Communist regime has selectively directed to its captive readership. Has it succeeded in creating and maintaining through the provision of adequate reading material a level of technical competence requisite to the coun-

try's material development? Has it succeeded in enforcing a degree of devoted conformity that will safeguard Communism without arresting national growth? It is probably too early to answer these questions in any unequivocal manner. But if the analogy of the Soviet case can be applied, it is at least doubtful that the erstwhile complacent attitude that technology and natural science tend to become sterile in a totalitarian regime can be maintained. This tentative conclusion seems to be borne out by the quality of some of the recent publications that have appeared in Chinese technical journals. Nor can there be any doubt of the degree of ideological conformity that has been outwardly attained. Some of this outward conformity may not be genuine, but, at the same time, some of the potential initiative in the society may have been killed.

According to a recent report to the first plenary session of the Academic Council of Philosophy and the Social Sciences of the reconstituted Academia Sinica by the Council's vice-chairman, P'an Tzu-nien, not a single text of high quality in the field of philosophy or the social sciences has appeared since the "liberation." However, what is true of the humanities and social sciences need not be true in the case of natural science and technology. It remains to be seen whether quantity can substitute for quality and whether out of a generation that will know nothing but Communist teachings there will be dynamic and intelligent leadership dedicated to the perpetuation and expansion of a Communist society. Perhaps, in the final analysis, the withering of the free intellect, which is the source of intellectual progress, will leave its effect on Chinese society. But in the meantime the Communist regime may achieve sufficient reward from its thought control and publication policy to serve its own end.

## *Decorum and Terror: Homage to Goethe and Hart Crane*

PETER VIERECK

The 'siren of the springs of guilty song'  
Is not the muse of Weimar's hushed salon.  
(Jazz bands would make Frau von Stein hysteric.)

Conversely, *Faust Part Two*, though bumpy, jars  
No spindrift off the beers in Brooklyn bars.  
(Classic discs would give a gob an earache.)

Yet you need each other, mint and thyme,  
Yours the cool and yours the acrid clime;  
Art's two equal, different truths you mime.  
Since a ghost can vault the fence of time,  
Meet as house guests here within my rhyme.  
(Distant first, each cagey and satiric.)

As ice breeds bears, polarity brings strife:  
"I hate you, Johann, for your Tory life."  
—"Bohemia's old reproach to poise Homeric."

"But that same poise with cant and cushions rife  
(Official titles, prizes, buffer-wife)  
Appeases Babbitts—while I feel their knife.  
Old fraud, your crass success makes me choleric."

Then Johann: "Banal scars from burgher-baiting  
Are not the only pangs of song-creating.  
You chose the doom that cancels woes Wertheric,  
But I—I lived them. Whose the grimmer sea-wreck?"  
—"Woes neat and brain-planned as a labeled key-rack  
You made vast myths of, hamming like a Garrick."



"And was your Bridge myth any less chimeric?  
Walt, city slicker, sold the unaware hick  
Not even goldbricks—bricks of rusty ferric."

"Your German Welt-schmalz I, in turn, admonish;  
Eke *grands amours* from tussles in a hay-rick  
Or 'soulful' moods from pressures atmospheric,  
But one thing spare us: call them not '*daemonisch*'—  
While buttering patrons, unctuous as a cleric."

"Patrons? Before you snub the courtier's prance,  
Explain a certain check of Otto Kahn's.  
*Amerika, du hast es besser* in finance:  
Have you no agent, Hart, by any chance,  
To book my lectures? Here's my song and dance:  
For women's clubs, the Elder Statesman stance;  
For eggheads, *Faust* translated in Amharic.  
My fees would burst all boundaries numeric.  
You, too, thinned Sapphic gold of pure romance  
With pompous public dross of odes Pindaric."

—"When I marched terror through decorum's barrack,  
Or you your Werther through salons Weimarinic,  
In all art's wars no triumph was more Pyrrhic."  
—"Wars you yourself, your own worst mutineer, wreck."

"Better a war well lost and meteoric  
Than triumphs basking drowsy and euphoric.  
Johann, your ego never shared or co-starred;  
Your secret fear of failing makes you boast hard.  
Your classicism? What a corny postcard,  
An alp all scenic'd up and bella-vista'd."

—"Don't try to act as earthy as a coastguard;  
You're not exactly hearty and two-fisted.  
Americana lures you, Hart—resist it.  
There's nothing wrong with being tender-wristed;

Your gift is more Athenian than Doric;  
 Your best songs are not ruggedly folkloric  
 Nor grossly and gregariously choric  
 But subtly—this I honor—esoteric.”

—“I honor you for being self-invented.  
 Not even Jenghiz Khan was more Tartaric  
 Than you toward your own flesh, O self-tormented;  
 Chisel in hand, from your own myth you dented  
 All frailty away before they missed it.  
 The bust looks grand but never yet existed.  
 Johann, your history is unhistoric.”

“Your ways of seeing earth are untelluric;  
 Hart Crane, your necromancy smells sulphuric.  
 Not even Dracula was more vampiric  
 Than you on your own nerves: immensities  
 Of visual tropes from verbal densities,  
 An elephantiasis of imageries.  
 Fool when literal, genius when metaphoric.”

Then Hart: “You, too, were once not allegoric  
 But blazed with passions sizzingly phosphoric.  
 You now praise calm because can raise no storm.”

At once, through blinds, a schoolgirl's giggles swarm.  
 Ulriké enters—ancient blood beats warm—  
 Art's last conformist leaps to nonconform.

But here comes dawn to prod all ghosts to flight;  
 And two great artists, wranglers half the night,  
 Departing find each other strangely right;  
 You the classic, you the new-world lyric.  
 (Homage to both your shrines from Peter Viereck.)



(Continued from page 203)

the former executive director of the Chinese Association of Social Sciences. His book on the central government of China, 1912-28, will be published shortly.

**YUAN-LI WU**

("Chinese Communist Publication Policy and Thought Control"), formerly of the Central Bank of China, the United Nations Secretariat, and the Stanford Research Institute, is

now assistant professor of economics at Marquette University.

**PETER VIERECK**

("Decorum and Terror: Homage to Goethe and Hart Crane") appeared in the Summer 1955 issue of the *Spectator* with an essay on "The Conservative Case Against McCarthyism." "Decorum and Terror" will appear in Mr. Viereck's fourth book of poems, *The Persimmon Tree*, to be published by Scribner's in the autumn of this year.

*Men grind and grind in the mill of a truism, and nothing comes out but what was put in. But the moment they desert the tradition for a spontaneous thought, then poetry, wit, hope, virtue, learning, anecdote, all flock to their aid.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON



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